

01 February 2023, Wednesday



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1908
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Mining sector amenable to higher but fair taxes

By BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT

The mining sector is amenable to the government's planned higher taxes as long as the move will not put them out of business and not discourage the strong interest by the world's top mining giants to invest in the country.

Mike Toledo, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), confirmed to reporters after the US-Philippines Society press conference Tuesday, Jan. 31, that Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno has initiated a review of the revenue sharing scheme between the government and mining firms.

Toledo said that Diokno has the support of Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual and Socio Economic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan. In addition, he said, Environment and Natural Resources Secretary **María Antonia Yulo Loyzaga** said that the agency's decision would

be based on data and science.

According to Toledo, Diokno's proposal, which is still at a committee level in consultation with the private sector, is in recognition that the industry is a "big source of revenue". He agreed the need for more government revenue to projects, which financing has been hampered by economic difficulties due government's huge debt due to the pandemic crisis.

"But our taxes are already high, our excise tax is already at four percent, royalty, among others, aside from what we do to the community," he said.

Thus, he said, the industry is negotiating for what is "just and fair" increase in taxes rate for both the government and industry. He expressed hope that the new tax rates would not put them "out of business."

The planned increase in mining taxes also comes at a time when prospects are getting better. "Mining looks

very bright," Toledo emphasized.

Without revealing identities of potential investors, Toledo said there are lots of mining companies interested to invest in the country. These firms are interested to venture in nickel and copper mining.

"These are top five in the world," he said noting the interests come from Canada and Australia.

Other challenges being faced by the industry are the issue of flip flopping of policies and strong voice against mining.

But since the Philippines is very rich in natural resources, Toledo expressed optimism on the government's hopes of making it big as world's major supplier of nickel. Demand for nickel is becoming robust in light of the ongoing shift to renewable energy, which fuels demand for electric vehicles (EV).

This means more mining firms will go into nickel, a major component in EV battery, he said.



5 largest miners express interest in PH investments

By Othel V. Campos

THE Chamber of Mines of the Philippines said Tuesday the world's five largest mining companies expressed keen interest to pursue mining projects in the country with the lifting of the ban on open pit projects.

"They have shown interest regardless of taxation and the issue of flip-flopping of policies. These are some of the issues being discussed between the Department of Finance and the mining industry," CMP chairman Michael Toledo said at the sidelines of the US Philippines Society briefing at the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati City.

Toledo said the mining companies, while concerned over anti-mining sentiments, were looking at the Philippines as the fifth highly-mineralized country in the world. Opportunities for mining outweigh other adversities, he said.

He said this interest from global mining firms bodes well for the Philippines as the shift to renewable power sources like the green batteries gain ground.

Nearly 100 percent of the metals used for renewable power and green batteries come from mining, especially for electric vehicles, he said.

"You can just imagine if we will be the supplier," Toledo said.

Toledo said there are new developments in the mining industry, as the government reviews the existing revenue sharing scheme among the national government, the host communities and the mining companies.

The chamber said mining companies were asking the national government to take measures not to overtax the sector which is already heavily taxed.



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Global miners eye PH amid plans of a new fiscal regime

THE world's top five miners are looking again at the Philippines for possible investments even as the Department of Finance (DOF) is set to review the revenue-sharing in the mining industry, according to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP).

The Philippines is set to establish a new fiscal regime for the industry to boost government revenue.

A pending legislative bill proposes royalty payments of 3 percent on gross output of large-scale miners, a margin-based windfall tax, on top of other taxes.

Mike Toledo, chair of COMP, told reporters mining companies from Canada, Australia among others have taken a sudden interest in the Philippines' mineral resources especially nickel, copper and gold. This after the government lifted the ban on open pit mining and the moratorium on new mining permits.

Toledo said the COMP is negotiating with the DOF on what should be a "fair" tax in mining.

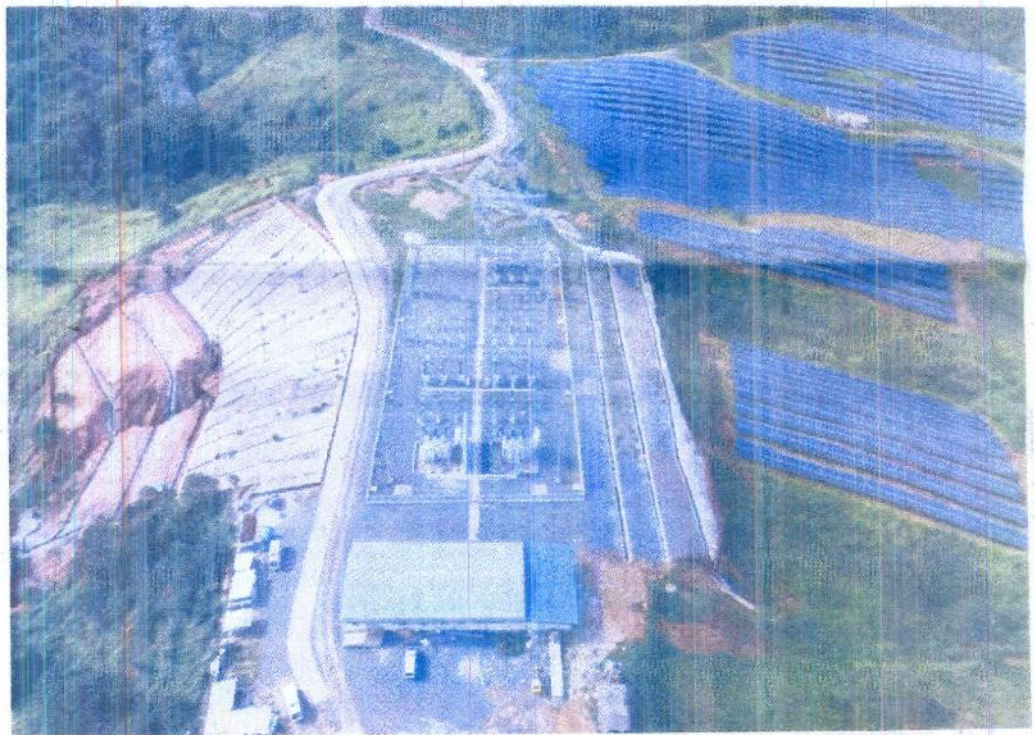
Toledo said the idea of the review of the revenue-sharing is to rationalize the tax and settle once and for all, the taxes that the mining industry has to pay.

"Definitely they will raise (the rates) so that is why we are negotiating (with DOF)," Toledo said.

He added it has been established that the Philippines has the highest tax among other mining jurisdictions.

"The excise tax has been raised to 4 percent and we pay royalties, corporate taxes, local taxes. There are so many taxes that we're paying aside from what we do for the community where we put up hospitals, roads, etc," he said.

See GLOBAL ► Page A2



Largest nickel producer. The Philippines has 34 operating nickel mines but only has two nickel processing plants, which are both partly owned by Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC photo)

Toledo said the DOF recognizes that mining if allowed to flourish can be a big source of revenue to fund government projects and pay off its debt that has risen due to the pandemic.

Toledo said aside from taxes, mining companies consider other factors in investing in the Philippines: the flip flopping of policies and the very strong voice of anti-mining.

Meanwhile, Toledo said COMP supports government's thrust to encourage nickel processing in the country to support the switch to renewables since nickel is an

important component of batteries in electric vehicles (EVs).

"We have four (nickel) processing plants and we need more. But you need to see volume. You also want to review the cost of power. You need to (look at granting) incentives because putting up a processing plant is very expensive. It's not cheap," Toledo said.

A Reuters report yesterday quoted Dante Bravo, president of the Philippine Nickel Industry Association, as saying government's plan to impose an up to 10 percent tax on nickel ore exports could force local producers to

close up shop.

"The initial proposal in the House of Representatives was 10 percent. That will kill the industry," Bravo told Reuters.

"We need to be heard so the government will understand our side," said Bravo, who is also the president of miner Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc.

The Philippines is looking at taxing nickel ore exports to encourage miners in the world's second-biggest supplier of the material - which is used in making stainless steel and batteries for EVs - to invest in local processing

instead of just selling raw ore.

Bloomberg News on Monday quoted Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, whose department also oversees the mining sector, as saying "there's a range of actions including a progressive look at taxing exports" of raw nickel.

The idea is to follow in the footsteps of Indonesia, where a ban on nickel ore exports has attracted massive investment into processing plants. Indonesia wants to replicate the policy for other metals, including tin.

But, Bravo said, a comparison to

Indonesia is flawed because it has more reserves to support investments in local mineral processing.

The Philippines has 34 operating nickel mines and exports most of its nickel ore to China and some to Japan. But it has only two nickel processing plants, which are both partly owned by the Philippines' biggest ore producer Nickel Asia Corp.

Nickel Asia is partly owned by Sumitomo Metal Mining Co Ltd.

Latest government data show the Philippines produced 22.5 million dry metric tons (dmt) of nickel ore in January to September last year, valued at 46.8 billion

pesos (\$859 million), compared with 27.2 million dmt in the same period in 2021.

Based on data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, as of third quarter 2022, nickel ore together with its nickel by-products, mixed nickel-cobalt sulfide and scandium oxalate continued to have the largest share with P86.94 billion or 49.40 percent in the country's metallic mineral production value for the period.

For the period, total metallic mineral production value was at P175.61 billion. - *Irma Isip, Reuters*



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PSALM: 14 bidders

keen on CHEPP

By LENIE LECTURA

@lectura

FOURTEEN prospective bidders have signified their intent to participate in the sale of the 165-megawatt Casecnan Hydroelectric Power Plant (CHEPP), the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) said Tuesday.

The 14 firms are Fresh River Lakes Corp., Neptune Hydro Inc., Sta. Clara International Corp., GigaAce 11 Inc., Pan Pacific Renewable Power Phils. Corp., Semirara Mining & Power Corp., Global Hydro Power Corp., Belgrove Power Corp., Axia Power Holdings Philippines Corp., Panasia Energy Inc., Hansan Solar Corp., San Roque Power Corp., EEI Power Corp. with Soosan ENS CO. LTD.

and Soosan Industries Co. Ltd., and Peakpoint Inc.

During the pre-bid conferences held last week, PSALM said the interested bidders raised their concerns on the terms and conditions of the sale.

"The two conferences enlightened bidders of their lingering queries on the bidding process and the potential concerns attendant to managing the Casecnan plant," said PSALM.

Among the key issues discussed include tax laws and regulations that could affect the successor company; role of the winning bidder to lead the crafting of the Special Use Agreement in Protected Areas (SAPA) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; water permits for power generation and irrigation;

other permits currently enforced or to be secured by the winning bidder; observance of Indigenous Peoples (IP) rights when the new owner takes over the management of the plant; and safety considerations prior to inspecting the plant.

The CHEPP is a "run-of-river" type of plant with limited impounding area. The water from the reservoir flows into the plant's powerhouse, down to the Pantabangan lake and into the irrigation channels of the National Irrigation Administration, which will continue its mandate of irrigating farmlands even after the privatization of the CHEPP.

Located at Sitio Pauan, Brgy. Villarica, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija, about 150 kilometers north of Manila, the CHEPP was covered by a

build-operate-transfer agreement which ended on December 11, 2021.

"We envision that the sale of the Casecnan Plant will be successful, efficient and judicious for PSALM and the winning bidder who will take over its management.

This second pre-bid conference paves the way for a good return on investment for the winning bidder, starting with a more market-responsive price and on an 'as-is, where-is' and cash basis sale for the Casecnan plant," said PSALM President and CEO Dennis Edward A. Dela Serna.

PSALM held its second and third pre-bid conferences last January 25 and 27, respectively. The deadline for the submission of bids is on March 28, 12 noon at the PSALM Office in Quezon City.



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PSALM: Casecnan plant a 'good investment'

BY MARIA ROMERO
@tribunephil_mbr

State-run Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation said the company that will take over the operations and management of the 165-megawatt Casecnan Hydroelectric Power Plant in Nueva Ecija will have a good return on investment.

"We envision that the sale of the Casecnan Plant will be successful, efficient, and judicious for PSALM and the winning bidder who will take over its management," PSALM president and chief operating officer Dennis Edward A. de la Serna said.

Last week, PSALM held its second and third pre-bid conferences that provided bidders with an avenue to inquire and clarify the terms and conditions of the sale.

Good return on investment

"This 2nd pre-bid conference paves the way for a good return on investment for the winning bidder, starting with a more market-responsive price and on an "as-is, where-is" and "cash" basis sale for the Casecnan plant," De la Serna added.

The privatization of the Casecnan Plant drew the interest of 14 bidders, namely: Fresh River Lakes Corp., Neptune Hydro Inc., Sta. Clara International Corp., GigaAce 11 Inc., Pan Pacific Renewable Power Phils. Corp., Semirara Mining and Power Corp., Global Hydro Power Corp., Belgrove Power Corp., Axia Power Holdings Philippines Corp., Panasia Energy Inc., Hansan Solar

Corp., San Roque Power Corporation, Joint - EEI Power Corporation, Soosan ENS CO. Ltd., Soosan Industries Co. Ltd. and Peakpoint Incorporated.

Among the key issues discussed in-depth between and among the bidders were the tax laws and regulations that could impact the successor company and the role of the winning bidder to lead the crafting of the Special Use Agreement in Protected Areas with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Likewise, water permits for power generation and irrigation, other permits currently enforced or to be secured by the winning bidder, observance of Indigenous Peoples' rights when the new owner takes over plant management, and safety considerations before inspecting the plant were discussed.

Deadline for bids submission

The deadline for bids submission for the Casecnan Plant is on 28 March, noon at the PSALM Office in Quezon City.

Interested parties are advised to send their inquiries to the Chairperson of the Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee through the email address of the PBAC Secretariat.

Developed in the 1990s, Casecnan Plant is a "run-of-river" type of power plant with a limited impounding area located at Sitio Pauan, Brgy. Villarica, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija. It was covered by a build-operate-transfer agreement, which ended on 11 December 2021.



'Pangungurakot' sa karagatan

PUWEDENG tawaging sea mining o quarrying. Pero ang dulo nito ay pangungurakot pa rin ng ating likas na yaman ng karagatan ng Pilipinas.

Iniulat sa isang broadsheet ang paglapastangan sa ating karagatan ng malalaking barko na hindi tinukoy kung ito'y pag-aaring mga dayuhan.

Nasisira ang mga lambat ng mga Pilipinong mangingisda sa tuwing sinasagasaan ang kanilang mga lambat.

Kaunti na ang kanilang mga huling isda dahil sa "quarrying" at "mining" na ginagawa ng mga barko.

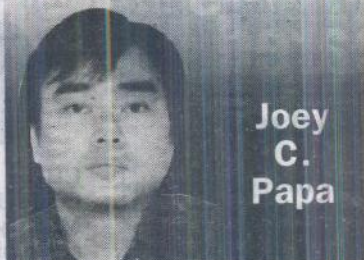
Isinasakay sa mala-higanteng barko ang mga buhangin na kinukuha sa ating karagatan sa paligid ng Cavite at Bataan, upang gamitin 'umano sa reclamation projects.

Kailan lang ay ibinalita sa akin ng isang community worker ang matinding quarrying sa may isang isang lugar sa lalawigan ng Cebu.

Bumalik na raw muli ang sistemang "muro-ami" na kung saan kinakayod ng malalaking barko ang lupa ng karagatan upang mahuli lahat ng isda.

Ang alam ko'y ipinagbawal na ang sistemang ito. Kahit mga bagong

BANGON KALIKASAN



Joey
C.
Papa

silang na isda ay nahuhuling "muro-ami" at hindi nagkakaroon ng pagkakataong lumaki ang mga ito.

Kapag naging maputik na ang lupa ng dagat dahil sa kakayod ng mga higanteng barko, wala nang mabubuhay na anumang isda ditto. Hindi sila mangingitlog sa maputik na lugar.

Dapat kumilos ang pamahalaan sa nangyayaring ito.

Bata pa ako'y lagi nang agrabyado ang mga mangingisdang Pinoy sa mga higanteng barko ng malalaking negosyo.

At ngayon ay "pangungurakot" naman ng mga buhangin sa ating karagatan ang hinahalibas!

Kaya dalawa nga naman ang pakinabang ng mga higanteng barko: pangisdaan at quarrying.

Ang taas tuloy ng presyo ng

mga isda at ang ilan tulad ng galunggong, pampano, salmom at iba pa ay kailangan pang angkatin.

Ang quarrying ng karagatan ay isang mapanirang paraan. Lumalalim ang lupa ng dagat at magbubunga ito ng malalaking alon na maaaring pumasok sa kalupaan.

Hindi na katwiran ang ginagamit ng mga may-ari ng mga higanteng barko.

Wala na silang pakialam sa puwedeng kahinatian sa Inang Kalikasan lalo na sa karagatan.

At tila wala silang pakialam sa kabuhayan ng mga mangingisda at mga pamilya nito na nawawalan ng hanapbuhay!

At bakit naman may permit ang mga higanteng barkong ito?

Sinong ahensya ng pamahalaan ang nagbigay ng permit?

Tiningnan ba ng mga ahensyang ito ang sasapitin ng ating karagatan at hanapbuhay ng mga mangingisdang Pilipino?

Dapat repasunin ng Senado ang mga permit na ibinigay ng kung sinumang ahensya ng pamahalaan.

Talo na ang mga mangingisda sa mga barko ng Tsina, talo pa sila sa mga nangungurakot ng ating karagatan.

Saan na ba talaga patungo ang Pilipinas?



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SMC's ₱2-B Pasig clean-up reaches milestone in Feb.

By James Loyola

Diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corporation (SMC) is expecting its P2 billion Pasig River cleanup project to cross the one million metric tons threshold in silt and solid wastes removed by this month.

This will come as its dredging teams focus their efforts on both ends of the river--the Manila Bay and Laguna Lake, where significant water flow restriction is known to occur.

SMC President and CEO Ramon S. Ang reported that, with the company's ongoing cleanup, the Pasig River's flood-carrying capacity has significantly improved. Just two to three meters deep at the start of the project, cleared sections now have depth of up to five to six meters.

Ang added that the target one million tons by February will be achieved just 20 months after the initiative was launched in July 2021, with the support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and local government units.

He noted that the pace of SMC's clean-up activities at the Pasig River is considerably faster compared to its earlier project to clean up the Tullahan River, owing to its deployment of more heavy equipment and personnel.

SMC's Tullahan River clean-up, which removed some 1.12 million metric tons of silt and waste from sections of the river traversing Navotas, Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela, took

a total of 27 months.

To date, SMC's cleanup teams have extracted a total of 927,198 metric tons of silt and waste from the Pasig River, with monthly targets now at more than 70,000 tons.

Apart from removing wastes and improving the flow and carrying capacity of the river to help mitigate flooding, navigability and safety for ferries and other vessels have also improved.

"We are happy to note that the easing of restrictions, along with the additional personnel and equipment we were able to put on the ground, are now allowing us to achieve our cleanup targets much faster," Ang said.

He added that, "Hopefully, by the time the rainy season sets in later this year, our cities will feel the benefits of the Pasig River's larger carrying capacity, along with government's other flood mitigation and control programs."

SMC's Pasig River clean-up, said to be the largest such initiative to date by a single private enterprise, caught the attention of Japanese shipping giant NYK Line last year.

The firm, whose seafarers are mostly Filipino, supported the project via a \$1.5 million grant for the purchase of additional equipment. SMC has pegged the cost of its entire Pasig River clean-up at P2 billion, or close to \$37 million.

Ang said the increase in output from the Pasig River

effort is also partly due to the addition of the San Juan River--a major tributary to the Pasig River--to the coverage area.

With a length of around 10 kilometers, the San Juan River emanates from Quezon City and passes through Manila, San Juan, and Mandaluyong, leading to the Pasig River.

"Compared to our earlier Tullahan River cleanup, the positive impacts of our Pasig River effort will be felt in even more areas. It will benefit not just people from Metro Manila, but also many who are liv-

ing in Rizal, all the way to Laguna de Bay," Ang said.

Apart from increasing the river's capacity to receive floodwaters, Ang said the cleanup will also reduce peak water flows that normally go to the Laguna Lake, via the Manggahan Floodway.

In many instances, areas near the Laguna Lake experience flooding during heavy rainfall or typhoons, because of heavy siltation, which causes the lake to overflow.

Siltation of major tributaries, apart

from pollution, is among the major challenges that need to be addressed to better manage flooding, Ang said.

Meanwhile, at the request of the local government units in Bulacan, Ang said that San Miguel has also started cleanup efforts at the Meycauayan River, one of the tributaries that make up the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando-River System (MMORS).

This is also to help address flooding in the province. To date, a total of 147,661 metric tons of silt and waste have been removed from this area.



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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SMC

Beating flood scourge SMC President and CEO Ramon S. Ang (second from left in black cap) oversees San Miguel Corp.'s campaign to clean up the Pasig River that raised the waterway's flood-carrying capacity. From just two to three meters deep at the start of the project, completed sections now have depths of up to five to six meters.



Editorial

Air pollution sa Metro, malala

SA kasagsagan ng pandemya noong 2020 hanggang 2021, bumaba ang lebel ng air pollution sa Metro Manila at iba pang kalapit lungsod. Sa mga panahong ito malinaw na nakikita ang mga bundok na nakapaligid sa MM partikular ang Sierra Madre. Nabawasan ang air pollution dahil walang yumayaot na mga pampublikong sasakyan—bus, dyipni at taxi. Ang mga ito ang numero unong nagbubuga ng usok na may lason. Tigil din ang mga pabrika sa operasyon.

Pero ngayong nagbabalik na sa normal ang buhay dahil sa unti-unting pagkawala ng COVID-19, nagbabalik naman sa dati—at mas malala pa ang air pollution. Sa kasalukuyan, hindi na matanaw ang Sierra Madre o maski ang Antipolo dahil sa makapal na usok (smog) na nakabalot sa Metro Manila ngayon.

Sa umaga pa lang, maaaninag na ang usok na malayang nalalanghap ng mga taga-MM. Ang usok na ito ay may taglay na Nitrogen dioxide (NO2) at PM2.5. Ang dalawang pollutants na ito ang dahilan ng severe cardiovascular at respiratory health illnesses. Napatunayan na ang exposure sa pollutants na ito ay nagpapahina sa natural na depensa ng katawan laban sa viruses at COVID-19.

Minsan nang sinabi ni President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. na tututukan ng kanyang administrasyon ang problema sa plastic pollution kung saan pangtatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansang nagtatapon ng plastic sa karagatan. Aniya, lilinisin ang mga kalat at sosolusyunan ang plastic pollution. Sana hindi lang plastic pollution ang kanyang solusyunan kundi pati ang air pollution na nakasakmal sa Metro Manila.

Sabi ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), 70 hanggang 80 percent na nagdudulot ng air pollution ay mga sasakyan at ganundin ang mga usok na galing sa pabrika.

Isang paraan para masolusyunan ang air pollution, lahat nang mga luma at karag-karag na sasakyan ay ipagbawal na sa kalye. Ang mga lumang sasakyan ay malakas kumunsumo ng gasolina at nagbubuga nang nakasusulasok na usok. Ipagpatuloy din naman ng DENR ang kampanya sa smoke belching para matiyak na ang mga sasakyang yumayaot ay hindi nagbubuga ng may lasong usok. Ipatupad din naman ang Clean Air Act of 1999 na matagal nang hindi gumagalaw at dekorasyon na lang.

Isalba ang Metro Manila sa nakamamatay na air pollution. Maawa sa mga susunod pang henerasyon. Palanghapin sila ng dalisay na hangin.



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Panaon Island sa Leyte idedeklarang protected areas vs overfishing

SANHI ng malawakang banta ng pagkasira sa habitat ng Panaon Island sa Southern Leyte, nakatakda itong ideklara ng Senado bilang protected areas laban sa overfishing, ayon kay Senador Cynthia A. Villar.

Despite the presence of extensive coral reefs and vibrant fish communities, the abundance and biomass of commercially important species show signs of overfishing," ayon kay Villar.

Dahil dito, inihain ni Villar ang Senate Bill No. 1690 na tatawaging "Panaon Island Protected Seascape Act of 2023".

Base sa rekord at suitability assessments ng DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau, marami pang lugar sa bansa ang kailangang gawing 'protected area' at isa sa mga ito ang Panaon Island Seascape.

May apat na munisipalidad - Liloan, San Francisco, Pintuyan at San Ricardo ang Panaon Island Seascape na nasa dulo ng Southern Leyte.

Binigyan-diin ni Villar, chairperson ng Senate committee on environment and natural resources, na kilala ang Panaon Island sa dekalidad na coral reefs.

"With 41% of the coral reefs surveyed (11 of 27), it is estimated to have greater than 50% hard coral cover—a rarity in the country nowadays. Reef-associated fish communities at the different reef areas around Panaon Island were found to have moderate richness and very high abundance," ayon kay Villar.

"Endemic wildlife such as Philippine ducks or *Anas luzonica* and the endangered whale shark or *Rhincodon typus* species are frequently sighted around the island," dagdag pa niya.

Iginiit din ng senador na kabilang ang Panaon Island sa 50 priority reefs sa buong mundo na kakayanin ang mga nakasisirang epekto ng climate change kaya't kailangan itong pangalagaan at protektahan.

Sa kasalukuyan, may 114 protected areas ayon sa batas.

ERNIE REYES



EDC powers Japanese recycling firm's shift to RE

ENERGY Development Corp. (EDC), the renewable energy arm of First Gen Corp., said on Tuesday that it will power Japanese waste management and recycling company Guun Co., Ltd.'s shift to renewable energy (RE).

Carlos Lorenzo L. Vega, vice-president and head of First Gen's power marketing and economics, said Guun aims to decarbonize its Philippine operations through renewables.

"This greening of supply chains is necessary if we truly want to be a part of the solution

to our climate crisis and at the same time, future-proof our businesses," Mr. Vega said in a media release on Tuesday.

The Japanese waste management and recycling company targets to reduce its carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions by 42% by 2030. Its Philippine branch which is located in Consolacion, Cebu generates about 8,000 tons of fluff fuel each year.

Fluff fuel is a form of alternative fuel from waste plastics and residual waste which is used in cement plants as a substitute for

coal. EDC said this form of recycling also contributes to Guun's CO2 emissions as "it entails huge electricity that primarily contributes to carbon dioxide emissions because it is usually sourced from coal."

EDC is sourcing the renewables from its geothermal facility whose output is considered base-load energy. The company's RE brand is called Geo 24/7.

The RE company said that Guun's move to switch to base-load renewable energy is based on its target to directly or indirectly

reduce CO2 emissions in its recycling activities.

After switching to renewables, Guun expects to reduce its CO2 emissions by 50-55% in its entire recycling process, which translates to about 261 tons of CO2 emissions.

"Looking at all providers of this 24/7 source of RE, we chose to partner with First Gen because of its proven track record in supplying geothermal power to its customers all over the country," Takeshi Konishi, senior managing director and general manager of Guun, said.

— Ashley Erika O. Jose



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Editorial

Misdirected protest on energy planning

A COALITION of environmental and community groups has petitioned the Supreme Court to strike down Executive Order (EO) 30, issued by President Rodrigo Duterte in 2017, arguing that it is unconstitutional and will lead to the expansion of coal and other fossil fuel energy projects in the country. The environmental and social concerns are quite valid, and it is to the country's benefit that there are groups actively working to ensure that they are addressed. Assailing EO 30, however, is not the right way to accomplish that.

EO 30 was written at a time when fears for the Philippines' near-term and future energy supply were particularly acute. In an effort to accelerate development, and in line with the Duterte administration's focus on infrastructure expansion, EO 30 created the Energy Investment Coordinating Council (EICC), which was given the primary task to review energy projects and declare those it deemed suitable as Energy Projects of National Significance (EPNS).

An EPNS designation is intended to fast-track the approval process for an energy project that will contribute substantially to meeting the country's overall energy demand. It provides for a number of exemptions and modified rules to accomplish this, with the initial vetting of proposed projects by the EICC intended to be the safeguard against abuses or inappropriate planning.

The activity of the EICC has slowed considerably since the end of President Duterte's term, but as of December 2021 there were a total of 149 EPNS projects, of which 74 are fossil fuel generation projects, primarily coal and gas, with most of the remainder being renewable energy projects.

The groups which submitted the petition against EO 30 to the Supreme Court on January 23 include Quezon for Environment (Queen); Atimonan Power to the People, Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED); Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCI); and Sanlakas. In a press release announcing the filing, Gerry Arances, executive director of CEED and convenor of Power for People Coalition (P4P), said: "We were right to raise concern regarding the constitutionality of EO 30 when it was first announced. In addition to the constitutional issues, there are very real economic issues which will confront consumers if this policy is continued. EO 30 has only reinforced the country's reliance on fossil fuels like coal. It is high time that the Supreme Court sees EO 30 for what it is: a blessing for the fossil fuel industry."

Some of the EPNS projects that are singled out by the coalition of green groups include the first one given EPNS status, the 1,200-megawatt (MW) coal-fired Atimonan One Energy power plant located in Quezon province; the 15 MW Palawan CFB coal-fired power plant project; and the Batangas LNG terminal. The Atimonan One project is currently on hold after the Supreme Court invalidated its power supply agreement (PSA) in 2019.

The reason the petition against EO 30 should and probably will fail is that it takes an all-too-common, emotion-based approach to addressing what very well may be real, unresolved environmental and economic concerns with some energy projects. The protestors provide no explanation for their determination that EO 30 is "unconstitutional," and the actual outcomes of the EPNS initiative belie the argument that the program is "a blessing for the fossil fuel industry." It is true that about half of the EPNS projects are fossil fuel projects, but about half are not; the 50-50 ratio actually closely follows the Department of Energy's long-established objective of having renewable energy make up 50 percent of the country's energy mix by 2040.

As has happened in many other cases where a particular law or policy has been assailed, the protesters, in this case are mistaking possible flaws in implementation for a flaw in the concept. The EPNS program is a good idea, one of the very few to come out of the Duterte-era DoE. It at least partially addresses the chronic obstacles to developing energy resources and catching up with the country's energy supply requirements. The government of course has the responsibility to apply it prudently, and that application should be carefully monitored. But there is otherwise no compelling reason for the Supreme Court to end the program. As the old saying goes, dumping the entire policy codified in EO 30 would be throwing the baby out with the bathwater.



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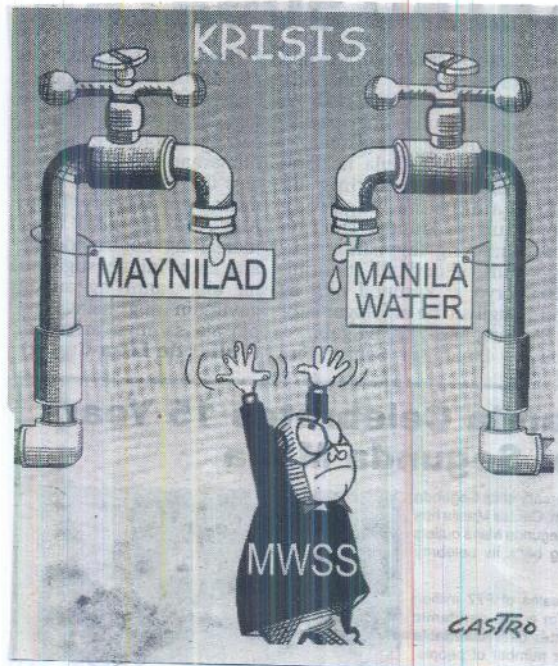
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
CENRO RXI-2B, Salacion, Panabog City

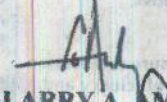
PAGBIBINTA NG LUPANG PUBLIKO

Ipanabigay alam sa madla na ang Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, Davao City ay tatanggap ng selyado o nakasulat na alok sa ika alas 10:00 ng umaga sa ika 21 ng Marso 2023 para ipagbili ang isang sukat na lupang publiko na inilarawan sa ibaba nito:

Lugar	:	San Pedro, Panabo City
Deskripsyon	:	Lot 17916-A, Csd-11-023734-D
Sukat	:	12,340 square meter
Tasahan ng Lupa	:	Php 224.25 per square meter
Aplikante	:	NICOLAS A. BANGA

Ang karapatan na bumili ng nasabing lupa ay ibigay sa tao o partido na makapagbigay ng pinakamataas na alok na hindi bababa sa tasahan ng lupa. Upang ang isang tao ay makakasama sa isasagawang subasta, kailangang siya ay karapatdapat na aplikante at kailangan bago magsimula ang subasta ay nakadeposito siya ng halagang katumbas ng sampóng porsento (10%) sa kabuoang presyo ng lupa. Ang deposito ay kailangang salaping papel, money order, cashier's or manager's check, ang siya lamang tatanggapin. Ang isang tao na sumali sa subasta na nagre-representa ng ibang tao ay makakasali lamang kung mayroon siyang pahintulot na ibinigay sa pamamagitan ng kaukulang pahintulot na nilagdaan ng Notaryo Publiko. Sa panahon ng subasta, ang taong sumali ay makaroon ng dagdag na deposito kapag ang kanyang alok ay itinataas para makupletong ang kabuuang sampóng porsentong (10%) deposito sa presyo ng lupa. Ang karapatang tumanggi o tanggihan ang anumang alok o sa lahat ng alok ay palaging nakalaan para sa mapahalaan.

Lungsod ng Panabo, Dabaw del Norte, Pilipinas, January 27, 2023.


LARRY A. AMBONGAN
OIC, CENR Officer



02-01-23

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
CENRO RXI-2B, Salvacion, Panabog City

SALE OF PUBLIC LAND

Notice is hereby given that Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, RXI-2B, Salvacion, Panabo City will accept oral or written bids not later than ten (10) 00 o'clock A.M. on **March 21, 2023** for the lease of the tract of land for **commercial** purposes herein below described:

Location	San Pedro, Panabo City
Description	Lot 17916-A, Csd-11-023734-D
Area	12,340 square meter
Appraisal of Land	Php 224.25 per square meter
Applied for by	NICOLAS A. BANGA

The successful bidder if other than the applicant must reimburse the latter of the expenses for the publication of the notice of sale and the survey of the land.

The right to buy the land will be awarded to the person offering the highest purchase price, which shall not be less than the appraised value of the land. In order that a person may be entitled to participate in the bidding, he must be a qualified public land applicant, and must, before the commencement of the same, make a deposit equivalent to at least ten percent (10%) of the purchase price of the land. Only deposit in cash, money order, treasury warrant, certified checks, cashier's or manager's check can be accepted. A person bidding in representation of another may do so under a duly executed power of attorney. During the bidding, the bidder has to make an additional deposit every time his bid is raised, to complete the ten percent (10%) of the purchase price, otherwise such bid as raised shall not be accepted. The government reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

Panabo City, Davao del Norte, Philippines, January 27, 2023.



LARRY A. AMBONGAN
OIC, CENR Officer



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor NIA Bldg., EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

BP WATERWORKS, INC.,
Applicant. Case No. 22-3509

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NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Deca Homes Leganes Residences Subdivision, Barangays Guinobatan and Guijaman, municipality of Leganes, province of Iloilo, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Residential and Institutional						
Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min.)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
½"	₱ 346.00	73.90	83.90	88.60	94.70	100.70

Commercial and Industrial					
Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min.)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
½"	₱ 2,014.50	167.90	201.40	201.40	201.40

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **20 February 2023**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least **fifteen (15) days** prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Iloilo and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.


Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 15th day of December 2022.

By Authority of the Board:


Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

<p>The Secretary Sangguniang Bayan Leganes, Iloilo</p> <p>The Barangay Chairman Barangays Guinobatan & Guijaman Leganes, Iloilo</p>	<p>The Homeowners Association President Deca Homes Leganes Residences Subd. Barangays Guinobatan & Guijaman Leganes, Iloilo</p>
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