

01 APRIL 2022, FRIDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR promotes ‘safe work space’ for its employees nationwide

Published March 31, 2022, 3:32 PM

by [Faith Argosino](#)

To raise awareness of sexual harassment and guarantee a safe space for its employees, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has conducted an orientation on the Safe Spaces Act of 2019 or Republic Act (RA) 11313 for its executives nationwide.

In a statement, DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said that the orientation on “Bawal Bastos” Law is part of the agency’s Gender and Development (GAD) activities to celebrate Women’s Month, which gathered 300 participants.

“This management will not tolerate any big or small acts of harassment. I, not only as your Secretary but as a father and a good shepherd, therefore call on our GAD committees nationwide led by Undersecretary Atty. Analiza Rebueta-Teh to leave no stone unturned to implement the Safe Spaces Act,” Sampulna said on March 30.

He added that the orientation also familiarized DENR officials with the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 or RA 7877 and its penalties for violators under RA 11313 and Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 11, series of 2021.

Meanwhile, Teh explained that heads of offices have the power to prevent sexual harassment issues in workplaces and will be held liable if they take no action on reported incidents were taken.

“Aside from refraining from committing acts of gender-based sexual harassment, employees and co-workers must provide emotional or social support to fellow employees, co-workers, colleagues, or peers who are victims of gender-based sexual harassment and report acts of gender-based sexual harassment in the workplace,” she said.

“We, as officials, need to come up with measures to encourage victims to speak up. We should practice a zero-tolerance policy towards these kinds of actions within the DENR,” she added.

Aside from the orientation, the agency, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Philippine Commission on Women also held a webinar on Adopting a Culture of Safety and Safe Work Spaces last March 22.

The DENR GAD office plans to implement a skills development program that teaches its employees to understand behaviors, investigate, convey mental health resources, and set up a counseling program for workers or victims. The initiative is part of the agency’s “Bawal Bastos sa DENR” campaign.



Las Pinas City gov't cited for keeping Zapote River clean

Published March 31, 2022, 5:12 PM

by [Jean Fernando](#)

The Las Pinas City government was cited by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as 4th placer in the Gawad Taga-Ilog 2.0 Search for the Most Improved Estero (Creek) in Metro Manila.

Mayor Imelda Aguilar said the awarding was held at the Makiling Hall, Park Inn Radisson, North EDSA, Quezon City on March 22 in celebration of the World Water Day.

Aguilar said the Zapote River passes through Barangays Zapote, Pamplona Uno, Pamplona Dos and Pulanglupa Uno.

She said Zapote River got the 4th place while Estero de San Miguel in Manila was hailed as the champion in the search, followed by Tripa de Galina in Pasay and Makati, Park Creek 23 in Marikina City, and Polo River in Valenzuela City.

The mayor said the award was related to the Supreme Court mandamus and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) guideline for rehabilitation and preservation of Manila Bay.

Aguilar thanked the residents in four barangays where the Zapote River is located for maintaining the river clean and free of garbage.



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DOH in Ilocos bans single-use plastics in health facilities

By: [John Michael Mugas](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Baguio](#) / 08:07 PM March 31, 2022

LAOAG CITY, Ilocos Norte—The Department of Health (DOH) in Ilocos has started the phased implementation of banning single-use plastics in its hospitals, and other health facilities and offices in the region.

In a memorandum on March 11, regional director Paula Paz Sydiongco said the move was in line with the 2020 resolution of the National Solid Waste Management Commission of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The ban will forbid the use of plastic cups (lower than 0.2 millimeter in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic knives, and plastic labo and thin-filmed sand bags of less than 15 microns in these facilities.

Sydiongco said all concerned personnel, visitors, and clients of hospitals and offices under the health agency are prohibited from using the plastic materials.

DOH has initiated three phases of implementing single-use plastics. Phase one began on Jan. 1 of this year, covering hospital and office personnel and visitors.

The second phase will begin on July 1 for healthcare workers, while the last phase will be on Jan. 1 next year, which will include prohibiting patients, including their visitors, relatives, companions, and other clients, from using single-use plastics.

The phased approach to implement the ban has to be done due to the COVID-19 pandemic, wherein the public has resorted to single-use materials as a means of “infection prevention and control.”

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said the “mitigation of unnecessary use of single-use plastics saves the cost of [hospital] services and also promotes sustainable waste management in the health facilities.”

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1576467/doh-in-ilocos-bans-single-use-plastics-in-health-facilities>



Strict waste segregation at households pushed

By [Mary Ruth R. Malinao](#)(The Freeman) - March 31, 2022 - 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — Waste solution providers have suggested to the Cebu City government to pursue the strict implementation of waste segregation at source and continuous education campaigns.

The city government on Tuesday held a focus group discussion (FGD) in preparation for the Solid Waste Management Summit on April 6-8, 2022.

Ma. Emma Ramas of Bio Nutrient Waste Management, Inc. hopes that Mayor Michael Rama will issue an executive order that the segregation ordinance and the “no segregation, no collection policy” will be implemented in the city.

City Ordinance No. 2031 mandates segregation at source, which is not implemented in the city at present.

Ramas added that the barangays should also be empowered to have the primary responsibility of waste responsibility and be given resources for such.

She said the Barangay Environmental Officers (BEOs) should also actively apprehend those who do not follow the policy for at least three months to instill discipline and habit to the people.

Allan Ogoc of Calgreens, another waste solution provider, said they will present a “high-tech” Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), which they will invest in Cebu.

“Our facility is going to be one of its kind in Asia. It’s American technology combined with technologies from Europe,” he said.

Ogoc said Calgreens will also put in resources for an educational campaign on how to properly recycle through social media and traditional media.

Meanwhile, Takeshi Konishi of Guun Co., Ltd. Philippine branch said they can help the city expand and modify its existing plant.

Other solutions providers who were also in attendance during the FGD were Cebu Common Treatment Facility, Inc., RMI Solid Waste Management, and New Sky Energy Philippines.

It was also joined by members of the Solid Waste Management Board, which includes the Cebu Archdiocese, Environmental Management Bureau-7, and Department of Education, among others. — **FPL (FREEMAN)**



Mining group urges next admin to ensure stable business climate

[Catherine Talavera](#) - The Philippine Star April 1, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) is hoping that the next administration will ensure a stable business environment for the mining industry to enable it to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts.

In a speech before members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, COMP chairman Michael Toledo described a stable business environment as one where “policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change mid-stream”.

Toledo pointed out the mining industry's tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth, saying the country has an estimated untapped mineral reserves of \$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 gross domestic product.

He said that mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over two percent of GDP. In 2020, mining's share in total exports and GDP plummeted to eight percent and to 0.6 percent.

Toledo attributed the decline to a combination of factors, including policy roadblocks such as the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and four-year ban on open pit mining.

Despite the lifting of the ban on open pit mining by the national government, the Tampakan project in Mindanao remains undeveloped due to a provincial code that still bans the mining method. In line with this, Toledo stressed that the next government must harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground.

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and Kingking, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million per year.

Toledo said royalties to indigenous tribes may also increase by over P600 million annually.

“The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts to be one of the most advanced mining laws. Its social and environmental provisions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it,” Toledo said.

Meanwhile, Toledo also expressed hope that the next government would further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector.

He said the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has supported COMP's adoption of the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) by allowing the industry association's members' to allocate a portion of their mandated social development funds for this initiative.

TSM is a growing global standard for best practices in mining. Started in 2004 by the Mining Association of Canada, the TSM has proven to be very effective in raising the standards of mining in the country.



Toledo said COMP also hopes the next government will continue encouraging increased transparency and reporting of ESG practices in mining.

“With strong support from our current government, our participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) allowed us to further demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in business,” Toledo said.

He said the Philippines was the first out of 51 implementing EITI countries found to have satisfactorily met the 2017 EITI Standard for fiscal transparency in the extractives sector.

“We in the Chamber are determined to be a strong partner in nation building – one with a strong focus on social development, on minimizing the impact of our operations on the environment, and on ensuring a fair division of economic and financial benefits of mining,” Toledo said.

“But first, please allow us to flourish. Modern mining technology, global mining standards, and the increasingly stringent laws of the land governing mining have evolved in the last two decades to assist, enable, and guide the industry to become a responsive partner. We like to think that we have also evolved in lockstep with these developments,” he said.



Stable business environment for mining sought

By Eireene Jairee Gomez April 1, 2022

THE next government must ensure a stable business environment for the mining industry to enable the sector to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) said.

A stable business environment for the mining sector, according to COMP Chairman Michael Toledo, is "where policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change mid-stream."

Toledo recently spoke before members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, an association of diplomats and consular officers. He emphasized that mining, especially for a country with an estimated untapped mineral reserves of \$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 gross domestic product (GDP), "has a tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth."

Toledo said mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over 2 percent of GDP. In 2020, mining's share in total exports plummeted to 8 percent, and to 0.6 percent.

He attributed the decline to a combination of factors, among them the "policy roadblocks" that included the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and 4-year ban on open pit mining.

Alluding to the Tampakan Project in Mindanao that is being stalled by a provincial code that still bans open pit mining, Toledo said the industry needs "the next government to harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground."

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and Kingking, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million pesos per year. Royalties to indigenous tribes will increase by over P600 million per year, Toledo added.

"The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts to be one of the most advanced mining laws," he said. "Its social and environmental provisions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it."

"We wish the next government will further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector," Toledo added.



City dads order DEPW to stop ‘quarry’ in Toong-Quiot road

March 31, 2022

MEMBERS of the Cebu City Council have questioned an official of the Department of Engineering and Public Works (DEPW) on why it continued to allow a private contractor to proceed with the Quiot-Toong Road project in Sitio Mahayahay in Barangay Quiot, Cebu City.

The project has reportedly been continued by contractor Docast Construction even though it has been issued with a cease-and-desist order by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Visayas (DENR 7).

During their regular session on Wednesday, March 23, members of the City Council grilled Engineer Ruel Tahom, DEPW project manager, over his failure to order the contractor from stopping the project even though there were already complaints against it from concerned residents regarding its earthmoving activities.

Minority Floor Leader and City Councilor Nestor Archival, who was the one who sought for an initial query on the matter, said he had received reports from Pardo Barangay Captain Archie Araw-Araw about the contractor’s continued quarry works in the area.

In response, Tahom told city councilors that the project has been suspended in the design and build stage due to lack of work permits. The road project’s design and other clearances have not been completed yet, he added.

However, Tahom said the contractor has been conducting slope protection and benching (slope stabilization structure) activities as the area has become prone to landslides due to previous quarrying activities.

Tahom also assured that while the contractor has been conducting earthmoving activities as part of its benching activities, no quarry materials were taken out from the area as the contract didn’t have any permit to transport these.

But Tahom’s assurance didn’t sit well with some city councilors.

Archival said Docast has sued Araw-Araw and his personnel for apprehending some of their trucks which were filled with hauled materials from the project site.

“They even claimed that they lost an income of P120,000 just because they were being apprehended. So it’s very clear that they are still hauling in the area,” Archival said.

Vice Mayor Donaldo Hontiveros also agreed with Archival, adding that he had also received complaints from officials in Barangay Quiot that they also saw the contractor conducting quarrying activities.

“We have also seen the videos from Councilor Dave Tumulak and complaints from Barangay Quiot chief Francis Espares that they also encountered similar activities from their side of the Quiot-Toong road. They are even trying to coordinate with us on how we can talk to the contractors concerning this matter,” he said.



For his part, Association of Barangay Councils president and ex-officio member Franklyn Ong told Tahom that DEPW should diligently monitor the contractor's work in the area to determine if they are compliant with environmental standards.

City Councilor Jocelyn Pesquera also agreed with Ong, even questioning Tahom why they were not monitoring the contractor's activities.

"We can not put the blame on Docast. Because if you have monitored the project diligently, it would not have seen that much damage. Too much damage has been done," she said.

Pesquera also criticized DEPW's design and build scheme with Docast, adding that they didn't even disclosed who will benefit from the hauling materials being quarried there.

Tahom, in response, said they earlier inspected the area and found that the hauled materials were just left in the area.

But he said he wants to coordinate with the Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office to monitor Docast's activities.

Landowners affected by the project also attended the session to raise their concerns.

Arlene Labaya, a resident of Sitio Mahayahay, said they were never informed about the project and its effects on their properties.

Labaya urged the city to compel the contractor to pay them for the properties that were damaged by Docast's reported quarrying activities.

Esterlita Cabahug, a landowner in Sitio Mahayahay, Barangay Pardo, said she had initially agreed with the project but she eventually protested on the project after seeing the contractors doing quarry in the area, which she said has posed a risk to her and other residents there.

Pesquera said Docast should be the one paying the affected landowners because their properties that had been damaged were not the government's accountability anymore.

In a separate interview, lawyer Manuel Soza, who represents the contractor, said they were initially ordered by the DEPW to resume works at the Toong-Quiot Road project on October last year.

But Soza lamented that they were forced to send a letter of request to the DEPW asking the latter to suspend the construction works for the project due to non-payment by Cebu City Government.

Soza, however, said Docast is committed to fulfill its contractual obligations and has continuously abide by and comply with all the orders and instructions of the DEPW. **(GDC, JKV)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1925237/cebu/local-news/city-dads-order-depw-to-stop-quarry-in-toong-quiet-road>



MWSS, Pagasa conduct cloud seeding over Angat watersheds

By [Frederick Silverio](#) April 1, 2022



RECEDING ELEVATION Angat Dam water level is going down. PHOTO BY FREDERICK SILVERIO

CLOUD-SEEDING operations are being undertaken over watershed areas of Angat Dam as the water elevation there continues to recede.

Sevillo David Jr., executive director of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), has confirmed that since last week, the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) have been conducting cloud-seeding operations over the watershed areas.

Records from the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office of Bulacan show that the water elevation of Angat Dam was monitored at 190.94 meters as of Thursday morning.

The water elevation of the dam is just 10.94 meters above its minimum operating level of 180 meters.

As the water elevation of Angat Dam recedes, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) has further reduced its irrigation water supply to its south and north service areas in Bulacan and some parts of Pampanga irrigated ricelands.

At the start of the dry cropping season, the NWRB allocated a total of 40 cubic meters per second (cms) to the two service areas of NIA (12.15 cms for the south zone and 28.00 cms for the north zone) being regulated by Bustos Dam.

Roberto de la Cruz, NIA provincial manager for Bulacan, said the water allocations for their service areas have been reduced with the north zone now allocated only 8 cms and the south zone with 6 cms.

The reduction in the irrigation allocations in these service areas resulted from the start of the harvest season with minimal water requirements for maturing rice crops, David pointed out.

Angat Dam, the primary source of potable water of Metro Manila residents, provides irrigation water supply to Bustos Dam for Bulacan and some parts of Pampanga's irrigated ricelands and power generation to the Luzon grid.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/04/01/news/regions/mwss-pagasa-conduct-cloud-seeding-over-angat-watersheds/1838427>



Mabuwaya Foundation urges public not to harm crocodiles

Published March 31, 2022, 11:44 AM

by [Liezle Basa Inigo](#)

SAN MARIANO, Isabela – Although it admitted the danger posed by the crocodiles because their sanctuary is without any fence, the Mabuwaya Foundation are still urging the people not to harm the reptiles should they chance upon them.



(Photo courtesy of Marites Gatan Balbas / MANILA BULLETIN)

Mabuwaya Foundation Chief Operating Officer Marites Gatan-Balbas said the municipal government of San Mariano, as well as communities located near crocodile breeding grounds, protect the reptiles in the conserved areas.

But she also acknowledged that these sanctuaries did not have fences, the reason why crocodiles sometimes come out in the open.

It was reported that on Tuesday night four fishermen chanced upon two crocodiles in the river in barangay Dicamay Uno, Jones Isabela. The reptiles were believed to have come from the waters of San Mariano, Isabela.

Four of the fishermen ran away to avoid a crocodile attack, but later the fisherman tried electrocuting the crocodile and got one.

“Kinuryente ang isang buwaya upang mahuli habang ang isa ay hindi nila nahuli,” a resident told.

Meanwhile, Balbas said he has to check the condition of the crocodile.

“Hindi dapat hinuhuli ang crocodile, pero naiintindihan din natin ang takot ng mga tao,” (‘Crocodiles should not be caught, but we understand the people’s fear’), Balbas said.

She also mentioned that the townsfolk of San Mariano are used to the presence of crocodiles, and that they respect them. Balbas pointed out that this is something very different from those living in downstream areas who think Philippine crocodiles are dangerous.

She reminded the public that killing crocodiles is illegal because the reptile is protected under the Wildlife Act. Balbas stressed that the Philippine crocodile is among the rarest crocodile species in the world.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/03/31/mabuwaya-foundation-urges-public-not-to-harm-crocodiles/>



A good example of plastic recycling

With proper support, the recycling industry can flourish

Wed Mar 30, 2022 12:00 AM Last update on: Wed Mar 30, 2022 12:27 AM



A worker at a plastic recycling factory in Saidpur upazila of Nilphamari is seen raking plastic chips into rows for drying under the sun. Once processed and packed, these chips are sold to various factories in the country while much of it is also shipped abroad, where they are reused to make new products. PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

It is heartening to see ordinary people in the country's northern region taking it upon themselves to turn hazardous waste, such as discarded PET bottles and disposable syringes, back into raw materials for other products through recycling. The dumping of plastic waste into waterbodies and rivers has long been a menace for Bangladesh. And with rapid urbanisation, the problem has been getting worse.

According to a 2020 World Bank study, Bangladesh's plastic consumption in urban areas tripled over a span of 15 years. Of the 977,000 tons of plastic consumed in 2020, only 31 percent were recycled, according to the report. The other 69 percent ended up in landfills, rivers and canals, as well as drains and unserved areas. This unmanaged plastic waste can seriously pollute the environment and have far-reaching consequences on human health. Despite Bangladesh becoming the first country in the world to ban plastic shopping bags in 2002, due to a lack of enforcement by the authorities, the plastic problem has continued unabated. And not only has the government failed to enforce the ban as well as comply with a 2020 High Court directive to ban single-use plastic in coastal areas and all hotels and motels across the country, but it has also been incapable of managing all the plastic that is produced and used.

Amid such a crisis, it is the ordinary people in areas such as Rangpur and Dinajpur regions who are leading the way. Not only are these recycling hubs doing a fantastic job of recycling plastic waste, but through their successful operation, they have also managed to provide locals working at these factories with decent livelihoods. According to a report in this newspaper, nearly 1,000 plastic recycling factories have opened up across eight districts in the region. This has allowed people, starting from ragpickers to the factory workers, to earn some money—daily or monthly—while contributing to cleaning up the environment.

This is a wonderful example of how creative the people in our country are, and it is they who hold the key to creating an environmentally clean and prosperous Bangladesh through their hard work and innovativeness. However, it is also a matter of fact that recycling needs to take place on a much broader scale. Therefore, we call on the government to incentivise entrepreneurs and businesses who are involved in recycling through policy or financial supports, so that Bangladesh can quickly overcome the challenge of plastic pollution while creating employment for people at the same time.

Source: <https://www.thedailystar.net/views/editorial/news/dhaka-wasa-must-answer-cholera-outbreak-2993291>



Library sa Portugal, may mga nakatirang paniki na tagapag-alaga ng mga libro!

[MGA PANGYAYARING KAGILA-GILALAS](#) - [Arnel Medina](#) - Pang-masa April 1, 2022 | 12:00am

ANG Joanina Library ng University of Coimbra Alta and Sofia ang isa sa dalawang library sa Portugal na may mga naninirahang paniki na tumutulong bilang pest control!

Maraming hindi makapaniwala na may colony ng paniki na naninirahan sa likod ng mga bookshelves sa Joanina Library. Pero ayon sa mga nagpapatakbo ng aklatan na ito, malaki ang serbisyong naibibigay ng mga common pipistrelle bats dahil kinakain ng mga ito ang mga insektong maaaring sumira sa mga libro.

Maraming species ng insekto ang kilalang sumisira sa mga pahina ng libro. Sa tulong ng mga paniki na nagiging natural pest control, napapanatili nila na walang insektong sisira sa mga libro lalo na ang mga antigo at priceless books ng Joanina Library.

Walang makapagsabi ng eksaktong panahon kung kailan dumating ang mga paniki sa Joanina Library. Ayon sa mga history books, may mga paniki na rito noon pang 1800s.

Dahil nocturnal animals o sa gabi lamang lumabas ang mga paniki, hindi nagagambala ang mga visitors ng library sa umaga.

01 APRIL 2022, FRIDAY



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MAYNILAD CELEBRATES WORLD WATER DAY: West Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. recently planted 5,000 mangrove propagules in the Manila Bay coastal area of Cavite province as part of its World Water Day 2022 celebration. Photo shows a volunteer from the Cavite Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office planting mangrove propagules during Maynilad's recent planting activity in Barangay Sinaguelasan, Bacoor City. Maynilad is set to plant a total of 10,000 mangrove propagules this year to cover four hectares of shoreline, bringing its total mangroves planted to 217,500 since 2013.



Group: Transform WPS into a 'marine peace park'

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

@jonlmayuga

AMID the growing tension and threat of maritime conflict over the West Philippine Sea (WPS), environmental activist group Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE) renewed the call to declare the region as a maritime peace park.

"With the climate crisis now at humanity's doorstep, the critical habitats in the West Philippine Sea face three-fold risks of ecological degradation, climate vulnerability, and maritime conflict. Amidst the election campaign, we must push our future leaders to commit to declaring the WPS as an international marine peace park to demilitarize and conserve the vulnerable area," Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE said in a news

statement.

This as tension continues to escalate in the area, with the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reporting that a vessel from the China Coast Guard (CCG) coming alarmingly close to one of its patrolships in a "close distance maneuvering" incident on March 2.

"Our country's recent initiatives to study new species or restore ecosystems in West Philippine Sea will be for naught if we do not stop infrastructure projects and other destructive activities by China. We need new leadership that will stand up against China's aggression and work for peace and sustainability in the region," he said.

Dulce noted that in 2016, an emergency motion was filed with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) that "all States and authorities in this

region suspend exploitation of natural resources, prospecting, or other activities, pending the study of how to establish marine protected areas in the South China Sea [West Philippine Sea] and Coral Triangle."

"If we truly want peace in the disputed territories in the West Philippine Sea, then we must work harder to push for the creation of marine peace parks and sanctuaries in the area. Sadly, biodiversity is the least talked about environmental concern during the campaign season," Dulce said.

The group's fact-check study came out examining the positions and track records of presidential and vice presidential candidates on environmental concerns. It highlighted that the positions on extractives and destructive projects were most notable. Biodiversity conservation, however, was the least priority.



Environment on my mind

It is quite disheartening to observe that political discourse in our country has not matured well. In fact, some have said that it degenerated because of the free-flowing space on social media (something like an open bar filled with liquor). Debates or interviews done by media outlets are plenty but due to limited time, a lot of questions are asked just to garner "sound bites" or to pander to the gossip-inclined audience. Ultimately, the reality is similar to an election — television/social media ratings are a numbers game, and whoever garners the biggest audience is the ultimate winner.

As Environment Section editor of this paper, I have received several emails from various organizations calling on our presidentiables to look into the issues about the environment. They lament the fact that among the 10 presidentiables, no one has presented an encompassing environment agenda. What's ironic is that the "green" agenda is pushed to the sidelines when, in fact, that could be a very relevant and strong platform to stand on considering what's happening to our planet.

These environmental groups collectively agree that there are a lot of issues that the next president should look into such as security, peace and order, foreign policy, infrastructure,

economic recovery, healthcare rehabilitation, etc. But what about environmental issues? What are the plans to combat climate change? Will open-pit mining be allowed? Will we still encourage the use of coal for energy? How about the protection of our endangered species? There are still a lot of questions unanswered when it comes to the green agenda.

Of course, the next president will have his or her own appointed DENR secretary but I believe that at this juncture, when it is only 40 days before the elections, voters must be fully informed about a candidate's agenda for the planet. Yes, this may not be a "sexy" pronouncement or may not even gain traction online or covered by the media, nevertheless the effects of a misguided environmental policy will not only see its dire impact on our lives today, but more so for the coming generations.

One of the emails I got came from Nazrin Castro, Philippine branch manager of The Climate Reality Project with an introductory subject calling on "the next set of leaders to put an end to policies that favor fossil fuel



EDITORS DESK

JOHANNES L. CHUA

companies, specifically provisions that allow them to pass the higher costs on to the Filipino people." This, I know, is a sensitive issue — but this is precisely what the next president will face as he or she needs to decide whether to favor the former or to side with the latter. Or will there be compromises?

"For The Climate Reality Project Philippines, our (country's) just transition to a distributed, flexible, renewable energy-based system is our best solution to address our energy issues on reliability, affordability, and security. (The next administration) must enable the environment to advance renewable energy in the country, starting with ending policies that only favor the fossil fuel companies," Castro said.

"Many companies and governments are already divesting from coal, but fossil gas is posturing to be the new coal. Its expansion must be reviewed in order to avoid lock-in commitments and prevent ourselves from entering into situations like we have with coal. Ultimately, investments in renewable energy technologies must pour in and our grid must be upgraded and modernized to facilitate the just transition to renewable energy."

I also received an email from Plastic-Free Pilipinas Project-EcoWaste Coalition, urging local and national candidates to prioritize the green agenda in their electoral platform.

"With more than 60 million young voters, we wish to 'swing the vote' toward a green and sustainable future without incineration, without plastic pollution, and without the climate crisis," said Jochelle Magracia of Young Bataenos for Environmental Advocacy Network (YBEAN). "We clamor for systems change, especially

the promotion of a green development paradigm. Economic growth can no longer be at the expense of the environment, but rather the economy must be directed toward sustained progress that prioritizes planetary and people's health."

Meanwhile, green activist Derek Cabe of the Nuclear and Coal-Free Bataan Movement cautioned voters not to be distracted by the political fanfare. "Instead, we should look at the candidates' records, positions, and platforms on human rights, democracy, the environment — their green agenda and how they address the persistent problems on plastic, dirty energy, and the likes."

On the other hand, the EcoWaste Coalition noted the lack of a national policy or plan to complement the nearly 500 local ordinances on single-use plastics (SUP). While the House passed a SUP ban last August, the Senate has yet to follow suit. "They are quick fixes and false solutions that only address plastic pollution downstream," the group said.

With all these statements from various groups who are passionate in saving this planet from further destruction and deterioration, it is a great injustice for the green agenda to be left out in the election campaign conversation. Though there are a lot of discouraging signs, I would like to be "optimistic" at this moment and join all these environmental organizations in sounding the alarm louder in order to reach the ears of each presidentiable.

It is not too late. Or is it?

Johannes L. Chua is the editor of the Environment and Sustainability section.



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Mining group urges next admin to ensure stable business climate

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) is hoping that the next administration will ensure a stable business environment for the mining industry to enable it to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts.

In a speech before members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, COMP chairman Michael Toledo described a stable business environment as one where "policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change mid-stream".

Toledo pointed out the mining industry's tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth, saying the country has an estimated untapped mineral reserves of \$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 gross domestic product.

He said that mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over two percent of GDP. In 2020, mining's share in total exports and GDP plummeted to eight percent and to 0.6 percent.

Toledo attributed the decline to a combination of factors, including policy roadblocks such as the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and four-year ban on open pit mining.

Despite the lifting of the ban on open pit mining by the national government, the Tampakan project in Mindanao remains undeveloped due to a provincial code that still bans the mining method. In line with this, Toledo stressed that the

next government must harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground.

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and Kingking, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million per year.

Toledo said royalties to indigenous tribes may also increase by over P600 million annually.

"The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts to be one of the most advanced mining laws. Its social and environmental provisions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it," Toledo said.

Meanwhile, Toledo also expressed hope that the next government would further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector.

He said the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has supported COMP's adoption of the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) by allowing the industry association's members' to allocate a portion of their mandated social development funds for this initiative.

TSM is a growing global standard for best practices in mining. Started in 2004 by the Mining Association of Canada, the TSM has proven to be very effective in raising the standards of mining in the country.

Toledo said COMP also hopes the next government will continue encouraging increased transparency and reporting of ESG practices in mining.

"With strong support from our current government, our participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) allowed us to further demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in business," Toledo said.



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Nayong Pilipino gagawing urban green space

Nagsagawa ang Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF) ng tree planting activity bilang pakikiisa sa National Women's Month at makabuo ng urban green space sa loob ng Entertainment City ng Parañaque City.

Ayon kay NPF Executive Director Gertie Du-

ran-Batocabe, kailangang parte na ng new normal ang pagbuo ng maraming green spaces.

"It is our dream to transform this 9.5-hectare property into a Cultural Park and Creative Hub nestled within an urban forest, incorporating the 30% built space and 70% green

space design scheme," ayon kay Duran-Batocabe.

Matatandaang binuksan ng NPF ang kanilang pasilidad para magamit bilang Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) quarantine facility at mega vaccination facility na pag-suporta sa responde ng pamahalaan kaugnay sa

COVID-19 pandemic.

"As you all know, the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered important conversations about the importance of urban green spaces and how those should be designed to benefit the health and well-being of the populace," ayon pa dito. **(Vick Aquino)**



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Bird flu outbreak sa PH dineklara ng DA

Nagdeklara ang Department of Agriculture (DA) ng bird flu outbreak sa bansa dahil sa pagtaas ng mga kaso nito partikular sa Central Luzon.

Ayon kay Agriculture Secretary William Dar, apektado ng bird flu ang mga alagang bibe at pugo sa naturang rehiyon.

Ang bird flu ay dala ng mga migratory bird na dumadayo sa bansa.

“Yong apektado karamihan dito

sa Central Luzon pero mostly ducks and quails. Meron tayong pagtugon agad sa mga apektado at nabibigyan na rin ng ayuda ‘yong mga naapektuhan,” wika ni Dar.

Una nang naglabas ng memorandum ang DA upang ma-regulate ang paggalaw ng mga alagang bibe, pugo, manok at iba pang poultry sa mga apektadong lugar. **(Mark Joven Delantar)**



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'Govt flexi-work to be permanent

By Rey E. Requejo

THE Civil Service Commission is making permanent the alternative and flexible work arrangement for government employees, Commissioner Aileen Lizada said Thursday.

Interviewed on Super Radyo dzBB, Lizada said the flexi-workplace would be implemented even without a pandemic.

"The new Commission (is) straightening out and making the flexi-workplace permanent. We are institutionalizing it, not only during the time of the pandemic," she said.

Lizada said CSC Memorandum Circular 18 issued in 2020 on alternative and flexible work arrangement was only effective during a public health emergency, which is set to end by September this year.

The flexi-workplace includes work-from-home, skeletal workforce, four-day

compressed workweek, staggered working hours, and a combination of the four.

Meanwhile, the four-day workweek implemented in the Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan and Court of Tax Appeals to produce the 10-hour work per day, like in the Supreme Court, will shift back to the eight-hour work per day starting Monday, April 4.

Earlier, Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo ordered the return to regular eight-hour daily work, also starting on April 4, after it found that the 10-hour work per day on a four-day workweek has caused inconvenience to many employees and "is counter-productive."

Under the eight-hour daily work, certain officials and employees at the CA and the CTA, just like at the SC, will have to report physically for work from Monday to Thursday, while others would have to be onsite from Tuesday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 pm.

SC, CA and CTA officials and employees who are not reporting on Monday and Friday will have to work from home.

At the Sandiganbayan, being both a trial court and an appellate court, heads of offices would have to determine who will report for work from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday and who will work from home for one day during the week.



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
MINES AND GEOSCIENCES BUREAU
Regional Office No. VII
Greenplains Subd., Baniad, Mandaue City, Cebu 6014
Tel No. (+63 32) 344-3047 / 343-8557 / 344 3046 / 346-1689 / 346 2275;
Fax No. (+63 32) 346-9176 / 236 1139;
E-mail: region7@mgb.gov.ph

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION OF MIDAN CORPORATION
FOR EXPLORATION PERMIT**

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 21 of Department Order No. 2010-21 (Providing For A Consolidated Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order For The Implementing Rules And Regulations Of Republic Act No. 7942, Otherwise Known As The "Philippine Mining Act Of 1995"), that **MIDAN CORPORATION** with office address at **18E Fort Palm Spring, 30th Street Corner 1st Avenue, Bonifacio Global, Taguig City, Metro Manila** has filed an Exploration Permit application, for the exploration of **limestone, gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, and other minerals** and particularly described as follows:

- I. Application Number : **EXPA-000223-VIII**
- II. Date of Filing : **February 03, 2020**
- III. Area Location : **Actin and Nagbo-Alao**
Barangays : **Basay**
Municipality : **Basay**
Province : **Negros Oriental**

IV. Technical Description of the Area *#

CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
1	9	23	00.00	122	40	30.00
2	9	23	30.00	122	40	30.00
3	9	23	30.00	122	40	00.00
4	9	24	00.00	122	40	00.00
5	9	24	00.00	122	39	30.00
6	9	24	30.00	122	39	30.00
7	9	24	30.00	122	40	30.00
8	9	24	00.00	122	40	30.00
9	9	24	00.00	122	41	30.00
10	9	23	00.00	122	41	00.00

Total area = **590.4446 hectares**

* **Exceptions:** The Applied Area shall be subject to Section 19 of RA 7942 and Section 15 ("Areas Closed to Mining Locations") and Section 16 ("Ancestral Lands"), of DENR Administrative Order No. 96-40, Series of 1996. Among other things:

- a) The following shall be closed to mining locations: areas with valid and existing mining rights; existing mining applications; and areas expressly prohibited by law;
- b) The following shall also be closed to mining locations except upon written consent of the concerned government agency or private entity subject to the evaluation and validation by the Bureau: areas near or under public or private buildings, cemeteries, archaeological and historical sites, bridges, highways, waterways, railroads, reservoirs, dams or other infrastructure projects, public or private works including plantations or valuable crops.
- c) Applications for mineral agreement or financial or technical assistance agreements covering; small scale mining areas; civil or military reservations; areas covered by Certificate of Ancestral Domain claims; or areas of ancestral land as may be defined by law shall require prior written consent of concerned individuals, groups or other government agencies having jurisdiction over the area(s) applied for.

Note: The Notice must be accompanied by a map/sketch plan with index map showing the nearest municipality(ies) and any major environmental feature(s).

V. Size of the Area – **590.4446** hectares

VI. Duration of the Permit

The permit shall be for a period not exceeding two (2) years from date of issuance renewable for a term of two (2) years each but in no case shall the total exceed six (6) years.

VII. Extent of Operation to be Undertaken

Exploration (Reconnaissance/Regional Survey, Semi-Detailed to Detailed Geological and Geochemical Survey, Topographic Survey, Subsurface Investigation (Test Pitting, Trenching & Drilling) of limestone, gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, and other minerals.

Any and all persons having adverse claims, protests and/or opposition to the above mentioned application(s) are hereby notified that their adverse claims should be filed directly within ten (10) days from the date of publication or from the last date of posting radio announcement, with the Regional Office or through any Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) or Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) concerned of the DENR for filing in the Regional Office concerned for purposes of its resolution by the Panel of Arbitrators pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act 7942 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. Adverse claims, protests or oppositions should be accomplished in accordance with Sections 203 and 204 of Department Order No. 2010-21 (Providing For A Consolidated Department of Environment And Natural Resources Administrative Order For The Implementing Rules And Regulations Of Republic Act No. 7942, Otherwise Known As The "Philippine Mining Act Of 1995"), and a copy thereof shall be furnished to the applicant by the adverse claimant.

For further particulars, apply or course your inquiries to the Regional Director, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, Regional Office No. VII, Greenplains Subdivision, Baniad, Mandaue City, Philippines.

ARMANDO L. MALICSE
Regional Director

(Signature)

Encl: A6

cc:

- The Acting Director
Mines and Geosciences Bureau
North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
- The Honorable Governor
Province of Negros Oriental
- Mr. Hyun-yang Cho
President
Midan Corporation
18E Fort Palm Spring, 30th St., cor. 1st Ave.,
Bonifacio Global, Taguig City, Metro Manila
- The Municipal Mayor
Basay, Negros Oriental
- The Honorable Barangay
Captain
Actin, Basay, Negros
Oriental
- The Honorable Barangay
Captain
Nagbo-Alao, Basay, Negros
Oriental

MT - Apr. 1 & 8, 2022



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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

AVIDA TOWERS SOLA
CONDOMINIUM CORPORATION,
Applicant.

Case No. 22-3269

x-----x

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Avida Towers Sola Condominium, Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa, Quezon City, Metro Manila, 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"	₱85.50	21.30	25.60	29.90	34.10	51.20

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **18 April 2022**. 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 Metro Manila 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 24th day of February 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

(Sgd.) **Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III**
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
Sangguniang Panlungsod
Quezon City, Metro Manila

The Barangay Chairman
Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa
Quezon City, Metro Manila

The Homeowners Assn. President
Avida Towers Sola Condominium
Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa
Quezon City, Metro Manila

The Administrator
Metropolitan Waterworks & Sewerage System
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road
Balara, Quezon City

(PDI – April 1, 2022)

01 APRIL 2022, FRIDAY



NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



WHO warns of virulent COVID-19 variant risk

Agence France-Presse March 31, 2022 | 8:29am



Director General of the World Health Organization Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus delivers a statement at the manufacturing site of German company BioNTech in Marburg, western Germany, on February 16, 2022, amid the novel coronavirus / COVID-19 pandemic. African leaders, co-founders of BioNTech and representatives of international health organisations met to discuss the production of vaccines against Covid-19 in Africa.

AFP / Andre Pain

GENEVA, Switzerland — The World Health Organization on Wednesday laid out three possible paths that the Covid-19 pandemic might follow in 2022 — with a new, more virulent variant the worst-case scenario.

The WHO said the most likely way forward was that the severity of disease caused by the virus would wane over time, due to greater public immunity.

But the UN health agency also said a more dangerous variant of concern than Omicron could be lurking round the corner.

The WHO released its updated Covid-19 Strategic Preparedness, Readiness and Response Plan, with the organisation's chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus hoping it will be the last.

It lays out three possible scenarios for how the third year of the pandemic will pan out.

"Based on what we know now, the most likely scenario is that the virus continues to evolve, but the severity of disease it causes reduces over time as immunity increases due to vaccination and infection," Tedros told a press conference.

He said periodic spikes in cases and deaths might occur as immunity wanes, which may require occasional booster vaccinations for vulnerable people.

"In the best-case scenario, we may see less severe variants emerge, and boosters or new formulations of vaccines won't be necessary," he said.

"In the worst-case scenario, a more virulent and highly transmissible variant emerges. Against this new threat, people's protection against severe disease and death, either from prior vaccination or infection, will wane rapidly."

Tedros said that scenario would require significantly altering the currently-available vaccines, and then making sure they get delivered to the people most vulnerable to severe disease.

Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's technical lead on Covid-19, said the virus still has "a lot of energy left", going into the third year of the pandemic.



Last week, more than 10 million new cases and 45,000 deaths were reported to the WHO, which said the number of new infections would be far higher as testing rates have dropped.

At the end of last week, more than 479 million confirmed cases had been registered throughout the pandemic, and more than six million deaths, although WHO acknowledges that the true toll could be several times higher.

01 APRIL 2022, FRIDAY



DENR

NEWS

ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



World Water Day 2022

Courtesy of PENRO Pampanga



Please click this link:

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159 views • Mar 31, 2022

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
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