

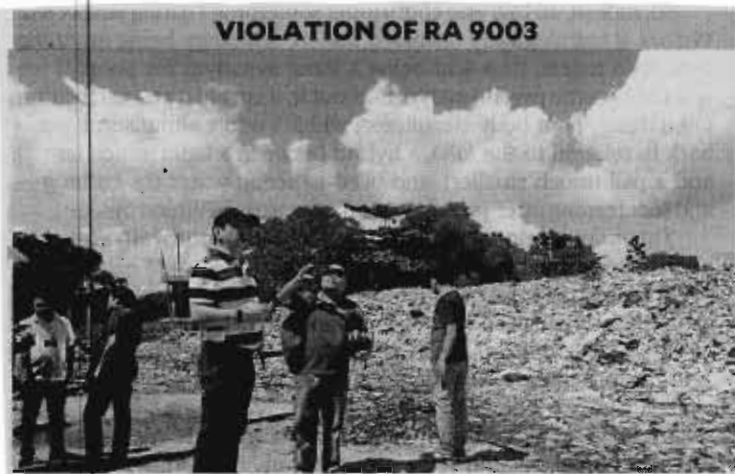
DATE : 11-22-19

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



VIOLATION OF RA 9003

CLOSURE Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda (third from left) inspects the Tagbilaran City dump in Barangay Dampas, which has been closed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. —LEO UDTOHAN

DENR SHUTS DOWN TAGBILARAN DUMP

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday ordered the closure of this city's dump, saying the operation of the 2.6-hectare facility in Barangay Dampas violated the law banning open dumps in the country.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, the DENR official overseeing solid waste management and local government concerns, issued a cease-and-desist order (CDO) against the city government for violation of Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Cathelyn Ontong-Torremocha, city administrator, received the CDO.

Segregation

"It is an opportunity for all of us to really plan to move and do our best as residents of Tagbilaran," Torremocha said.

Antiporda said solid waste dumped in the city's materials recovery facility were not segregated, "indicative of the city's

failure to implement segregation at source."

He, however, clarified that the closure of the Tagbilaran dump would be temporary to avoid a garbage crisis in Bohol provincial capital.

Antiporda also assured that the DENR would provide technical assistance to the city government should it seek help on solving its garbage problem.

"Funds are ready for the rehabilitation of the dump," he said.

Antiporda asked the local government to look for other sites where the city's garbage would be dumped, such as the clustered facility in Alburquerque town.

Tagbilaran generates at least 60 tons of garbage daily from the city's 105,051 households.

Tagbilaran Mayor Baba Yap on Wednesday met with the city's 15 barangay chairs to discuss the impact of the dump's closure.

Lormelyn Claudio, regional director of the Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas, attended the meeting.

—LEO UDTOHAN INQ



AS PRO-ACTIVE MEASURE VS DISASTER

DENR holds vulnerability survey

By Elmer Recuerdo

CATARMAN, Northern Samar – Sea level changes in the last few decades may have already caused coastal shift and altered government baseline data that are still being used in disaster risk management planning in many parts of the country.

To correct and update existing government data, a team from the Mines and Geosciences

Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is currently conducting a coastal integrity vulnerability assessment in Northern Samar.

Target of the assessment are coastal communities that are identified to be highly susceptible to geohazard in the towns of Bobon, Catarman, Laoang, Mondragon, San Roque and Palapag.

The emphasis of the survey is along geologically

critical segments of the coastline.

The team from Marine Geological Survey Division of MGB-Central Office, led by Senior Geologist Crisostomo Masangkay, will conduct exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity mapping; shoreline mapping and documentation of shoreline changes and historical data gathering.

It will also do a sea-bottom topographic (bathymetric) survey to determine the offshore

slope which is among the parameters of measuring vulnerability.

Masangkay said that the results of the survey will help local government units enhance their risk reduction strategy.

The surveys, expected to be finished at the end of November, is in line with the Nationwide Study of Coastline Shift and Associated Hazard, Affected by Sea Level Changes and other Geological Factors.



Large-scale miners urged to adopt smaller 'brethren'

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) is calling on large-scale mines to find ways to help small-scale miners near their areas of operations in support of the government's effort to regulate the industry.

MGB Director Wilfredo G. Moncano said one way of helping small-scale miners is by adopting and integrating them into the company's operations.

He is referring to a program that depicts a "big brother, small brother" relationship, a concept developed and successfully implemented by Apex Mining Co. Inc.

The program, he said, if replicated in other areas, will help address the problem brought about by small-scale mining.

Small-scale miners often encroach in mining tenements of large-scale mining companies, digging tunnels to extract ores to produce gold.

Such practice, without technical expertise, is dangerous as tunneling has led to deaths as miners are trapped underneath in case of tunnel cave-ins or collapse during operations.

At a news conference at the sidelines of the ongoing 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference (ANMSEC) organized by the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PM-

SEA) in Baguio City, Moncano said adopting such program will boost the government's effort to legalize small-scale mining operations.

The MGB is currently fast-tracking the establishment of Minahang Bayan to regulate small-scale mining in areas where there are existing large-scale mining operations, the big brother, small brother relationship is highly recommended, he said.

The process of establishing a Minahang Bayan is very tedious.

But by adopting Apex Mining Co. Inc.'s successful program, he said, large-scale miners can be a big brother to their small-scale mining counterparts.

During the same news conference, Apex mining announced the successful integration of small-scale miners in its mining operations in its Maco Gold Mine in Compostela Valley.

PMSEA President Walter W. Brown, chairman emeritus of Apex Mining, said the pioneering effort help address the many challenges posed by the vastly unregulated small-scale mining in the company's Maco mines in Compostela Valley.

He said Apex Mining is willing to help other companies replicate their program in areas where mining culture will allow, explaining that in some areas, the big brother, small brother concept can work, but it may not be workable in some.

"We tried to implement it in Benguet, but it did not work well because of the culture," he said. Small-scale miners, he noted, may not be willing to be integrated in large-scale mining operations.

According to Louie Sarmiento, president and chief executive officer of Apex Mining, in Maco Gold Mine, small-scale miners are well integrated.

"What we did is tap small-scale miners. In some areas where heavy equipment is not possible, we deploy small-scale miners to do the job," he said in a mix of English and Filipino.

There are around 800 small-scale miners who now work with Apex, he said.

According to Moncano, subcontracting or whatever arrangement is acceptable to large-scale mines and small-scale miners will function, as long as the terms are acceptable and mutually beneficial.

This way, he said, problems like the use of mercury and cyanide, which are banned toxic chemicals used in amalgamation by small-scale miners, can be avoided.

This will also address the challenge of dwindling gold output because many small-scale miners are selling their produce to the black market rather than to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas gold buying stations.

Jonathan L. Mayuga



MGB ready to assist BARMM on geohazard map requirement

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jonlmayuga

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) will coordinate with officials of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) to provide technical support in the production of geological hazard maps in the autonomous region.

MGB Director Wilfredo G. Moncano, interviewed by the BUSINESSMIRROR at the sidelines of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Confer-

ence (ANMSEC) organized by Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) in Baguio City, said even though BARMM is autonomous and outside the mandate and jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the MGB, its line bureau, is willing to extend help the local officials to identify areas that are prone to disasters.

According to Moncano, the BARMM has its own environment agency but Manila and other DENR regional offices, through the MGB, can help generate geohazard maps for local government units (LGUs) in BARMM.

BARMM is composed of five provinces, namely Basilan, except Isabela City; Lanao del Sur; Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi; and three cities, namely Cotabato City, Lamitan and war-torn Marawi City.

The turnover of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to the BARMM was held last February 26, 2019. BARMM was subsequently inaugurated on March 29, 2019.

The Bangsamoro government, under the law, will have an asymmetri-

cal relationship with the national government as BARMM will have more autonomy than other regions in the country.

"While BARMM is autonomous, because they have their own environment and natural resource department and MGB, we will still help generate geohazard maps for them," Moncano said.

He added the MGB has generated and distributed the latest geohazard maps to various LGUs from the provincial down to the city and municipal level. Even some barangay units, he said, have received geohazard maps identifying the various geohazards in their areas.

The map, with a scale of 1:10,000 is "bigger" or more detailed and can pinpoint areas that are prone to natural disasters. Geological hazards include landslide, flood and earthquake.

Southern Philippines, particularly Cotabato, was recently hit by a series of strong earthquakes that claimed the lives of 22 people, and cause destruction to public and private properties.

The recent earthquakes prompted Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu to remind anew local officials to make use of the maps in coming up with disaster risk reduction and management plans, and use them in crafting local economic development plans.



BROTHERHOOD SYSTEM PAIRALIN SA MINING INDUSTRY

BAGUIO CITY - Ipinanawagan ni Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Wilfredo G. Moncano sa mga large-scale mining companies na kupupin o pakitaan ng brotherhood system ang mga small-scale mining companies para maassistehan ang mga ito sa kinakaharap na mga balakid sa pagmimina.

Ipinunto ni Moncano na ang konseptong big brother to small brother ng Apex Mining Co., Inc ay magiging malaking pamamaraan para masolusyunan ang kinakaharap na problema ng mga maliit na kompanya ng pagmimina.

"Small-scale miners often encroach in mining tenements of large scale mining companies, digging tunnels to extract ores to produce gold. Such practice, without technical expertise, is risky and often lead to death when tunnels cave in, trapping miners who manually haul the ores

during operations," pahanayag ni Moncano.

Sa ginanap na press conference sa on-going Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference (ANMSEC) na inorganisa ng Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) sa pangunguna ni President, Walter W. Brown dito sa Baguio City ay naihayag pa ni Moncano na makatutulong din ito sa gobyerno, na magiging legal ang mga small-scale mining industry dahil minamabilis na ng MGB ang pagbubuo ng Minahang Bayan.

Gayunman, ang proseso ay sadyang may kahigpitan at taon ang lilipas bago mabuo ang Minahang Bayan. Sa pag-ayuda sa konsepto ng Apex Mining ay magtatagumpay dahil ang mga large scale mining ay maaaring magsilbing big brother ang mga ito sa maliit na kompanya sa pagmimina.

Ipinagmanalaki ng Apex ang "successful integration of small-scale miners" sa mining operation ng mga ito sa Maco Gold Mine sa Compostela Valley.

Ipinunto naman ni Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong na kailangang gawin na ang responsableng pagmimina, kaya kinakailangang maipasara ang lahat ng mga small-scale miner tuad sa ginawa nilang pagpapasara sa 20 tunnel mining sa luntap na 2-buwan.

"In fact, we have spotted tunnels somewhere along Kennon Road. Small-scale mining through tunneling is dangerous because it makes the city's steep mountain unstable. Landslide is known to occur in Baguio City during heavy rain or in the event of earthquakes. Kennon Road is often closed because the road is blocked by debris during incidents of a landslide," pagpapahayag ni Mayor Magalong.



Mining sector eyes stronger ties with communities

Citing the earthquakes that hit Cotabato and Bukidnon, Brown, a geologist, said the sector must unite and maintain a harmonious relationship with the communities and the government

Members of the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) have embarked on a new initiative that will foster ties between mining companies and the communities that surround mining sites.

PMSEA, an organization comprised of mining sector stakeholders and its president, Dr. Walter Brown, said the initiative has been dubbed "Culture, Care, Change."

The initiative, he explained, calls on mining stakeholders to be more active in the local community affairs and extend aid in times of natural calamities. It is also advocating the preservation and appreciation of the culture of the communities, especially those belonging to the indigenous people.

He revealed the group had put much effort on advocating responsible mining last year but the campaign was interrupted when its main proponent, former Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez, passed away.

Brown said they now want to lead by example and prevent conflicts. Citing the earthquakes that hit Cotabato and Bukidnon, Brown, a geologist, said the sector must unite and maintain a harmonious relationship with the communities and the government.

"This year is a year of peace and I hope to come to a good start because with all of the natural disasters happening. We all have to work together to uplift the poorest of the poor," he said.

He said the relationship of the mining industry with President Duterte has improved tremendously. **Alvin Marcia @tribunephil_alvi**



TITLE:

Magalong halts small-scale mining

By Maria Romero and Alvin Murcia

@tribunephil_mbr and @tribunephil_alvi

BAGUIO CITY – In a bid to wipe out operations posing irreparable harm to the environment, small-scale mining will no longer be allowed in Baguio City after its local government discovered illegal mining operations along tourist spots in the city.

“I already prohibited small-scale mining through our environmental code. Our slopes here are already unstable,” Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong told reporters at the sidelines of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference.

“Baguio is a no mining zone. We cannot sacrifice safety, which remains our paramount concern. I told the council that we have to completely declare Baguio City as a no mining zone by the first semester of next year,” Magalong added.

Since they started the crackdown two months ago, Magalong said the local government of Baguio has apprehended more than 20 illegal operations of pocket mining near the areas of Atok Trail, Philippine Military Academy Area, and Kennon Road.

“The miners really know their way and they don’t have consideration to safety. But then again, mining is a livelihood. And livelihood means survival,” Magalong said.

The city official has asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to restore the illegally-operated areas to ensure safety in the area.

“We have alternative livelihood programs for miners. The DENR allowed Minahang Bayan and it has stringent requirements. If mining operators cannot comply, then they are out. But here in Baguio we totally don’t have that.”

He said small-scale miners are “very sneaky” and can operate under the radar.

“In fact, we have spotted tunnels somewhere along Kennon Road,” he disclosed.

Landslides are common in Baguio City, especially during the wet season.



Baguio targets closure of small mines by first half of 2020

BAGUIO CITY — Baguio City hopes to close all small-scale mines within city limits by the first half of 2020 as an environmental-protection measure.

"Two months ago *kinausap ko yung DENR at pina-sara ko yung mga butas siguro* by first semester of next year (Two months ago I spoke with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and I agreed to shut down the mines, which I hope will happen by first semester of next year)" Baguio Mayor Benjamin B. Magalong said on the sidelines of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference Thursday.

He noted that there are about 20 small-scale mining operations have been shut down, but cannot give an estimate how many more are still operating.

Mr. Magalong also said that the crackdown on their operations will not affect the city's economy since small-scale miners do not pay taxes.

Small-scale miners also do not restore the land after completing their digs, and their chemical use is little regulated.

Proclamation No. 414 and Proclamation No. 572 declare some parts of the city, which include Loakan-Apugan, Atok Trail, Kias and some parts of Mines View and Gibraltar, as mineral zones where mining is permitted.

The City Mining Regulatory Board (CMRB) also passed a resolution seeking to repeal these proclamations, citing the potential harm to the environment.

Some members of the city council are also supporting the declaration of Baguio City as a mining-free city to give way to the growing population, noting that sinkholes also pose a serious threat to people living in the areas.

"We cannot sacrifice safety. *Yon pa rin ang paramount concern namin. Kinausap ko yung council, na we have to declare that Baguio city is a no-mining zone!* (Safety is our paramount concern. I have spoken to the council for the need to completely declare Baguio City a no-mining zone)," Mr. Magalong said.

The city government is also providing alternative livelihoods to small miners affected by the shutdown, which includes the sale of rice, and vegetables, and hog raising. — **Vincent Marlet P. Galang**



BAGUIO CITY WANTS TO STOP SMALL-SCALE MINING

BAGUIO CITY: Baguio City government wants to stop all illegal and small-scale mining operations by the first six months of 2020. At the sideline of the Minerals Industry Symposium, Mayor Benjamin Magalong said there were 20 mining holes immediately shut down since they fall under geo-hazard areas in the city. "They have no considerations of the safety. Maybe because it's their means of livelihood, it's about survival. But we cannot sacrifice safety as it's still our paramount concern," Magalong said. "It's very dangerous because there is no restoration, especially now when they make holes, they just leave them as they have no responsibility over it being illegal small-scale miners," he added in Filipino. The mayor vowed to give alternative sources of livelihood to affected miners.

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'SAFETY BEFORE PROFIT'

BAGUIO CRACKS DOWN ON ILLEGAL MINING

By Karl R. Ocampo
@kocampoINQ

The local government of Baguio City has renewed its crackdown on illegal small-scale mining following the discovery of more than 20 mine holes in the tourist area, some of them near major roads.

During the Philippine Mine Safety Environmental Association conference in Baguio City on Thursday, City Mayor and retired Police Gen. Benjamin Magalong said they had begun closing illegal pocket mines in September in an effort to turn the city into a "no mining zone" as indicated in the city's environmental code.

Magalong said they were targeting first semester of next

year to rid the city of pocket mines and illegal miners.

Illegal mining operations have significantly compromised the city's land safety, Magalong said, with the popular tourist site becoming more vulnerable to climate change, especially with floods and heavy rains that could cause landslides.

"Our [mountain] slopes have become very, very unstable. We learned that these were caused by illegal mining. And these are just in the slopes. How many more out there are potential danger zones?" the mayor said.

Following close coordination with the local government of Itogon and officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Maga-

long said 20 mining holes were discovered in various areas, some of them near Kennon Road.

Other holes were found near the famous Atok trail, the Philippine Military Academy, and the boundary of Baguio City and Benguet province, where illegal miners continue to process gold.

Unregulated mining continues to be an attractive source of income for uplanders since gold ingots command a high price in the black market.

But Magalong said the city "cannot sacrifice safety for profit."

As alternative livelihood, he said the city could offer farming, marketing and sales programs, as well as livestock raising. INQ



Baguio moves to become mining free by next year

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

BAGUIO CITY - The Summer Capital of the Philippines will soon be a mining-free area after the local government started its crackdown on small pocket mines amid the continued danger it poses to one of the country's top tourist spots.

Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong said he has begun to shut down small-scale mining operations in the area as mountains are getting severely degraded, making slopes very unstable.

On the sidelines of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety Environment Conference organized by the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association, Magalong said

about 20 pocket mines had already been closed since September.

"Hopefully (we can finish) by the first semester of next year. Small scale miners are very sneaky, we really need to go to them because they are very good at hiding," Magalong told reporters Thursday.

"Every now and then, we still get reports that some are starting to mine again, like in Kennon Road, in Atok Trail, the area near PMA (Philippine Military Academy). These are the areas that we are looking at," he said.

Baguio City is really a non-mining zone, but illegal small scale miners are doing operations following the mountainous landscape of the city.



Pasig River: The dying vein of Manila

IT is just a single flow of water that has given rise to the complexity and diversity of all life that we know of today. Rivers are the foundations of civilizations throughout the course of human history, from the Nile, which gave birth to the early Egyptians, giving water and food that has thrived even after 30 million years, to the Amazon, which stretches across the whole continent of South America, nourishing the unparalleled diversity of flora and fauna that can be found in its forests. Rivers are channels and veins that connect our lands to the vast ocean — bridges of life for all that inhabit the Earth. Bridges that could both unite and divide a city, a country and a nation. The Pasig River is one of these important rivers that have been neglected throughout the decades of developing Manila. In colonial times, the Pasig River was a source of food, water, leisure and transport, but today, it is considered a mere wasteland — forgotten, ill and dead.

Even before, the City of Manila



INTO THE
WILD

GAB MEJIA

was deemed the “Paris of Asia,” with the Pasig River having the semblance of the famous Seine River of France that flows throughout the preserved Romanesque and Parisian architecture and vast verdant plains. A single flow bisects the greater metro, with connecting tributaries extending all the way to different cities and towns from Makati, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Marikina and Laguna. One river being managed by different municipalities with different policies, ideals, and levels of enforcement, especially in keeping it and its tributaries clean of unwanted wastes like plastic pollution, and toxic wastes coming from industries and communities. We divide the river into different parts, treating it as if it is not one, but in reality, it is an interconnected vein from which

the blood of our city flows.

The Pasig River is part of our daily life more than we know; once a symbol of growth and development for the greater city of Manila, it is now a symbol of lost hope — a microcosm of the ruling dynamics and prevailing issues in the Philippines, divided, dirty and dying. Recently, the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) was abolished by President Duterte for having a low accomplishment rate despite having used most of the funds allotted to it in the 20 years of its establishment. Twenty long years now wasted due to the lack of commitment and participation of local government units, companies and communities, which in turn ends up in spending more money in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, a contentious band-aid solution, since you cannot ultimately clean the downstream waterbodies like Manila Bay if you do not clean and rehabilitate the source from where the waste comes from. It is only by realizing the unused potential and value of how much we can

get from the Pasig River, as more than just an economic gain but as a foundation for building the quality of life of the people living in the city, that we can preserve it in the next decades to come. Imagine this river as providing an alternative and efficient means of transport to help alleviate the traffic congestion commuters and drivers endure in our chaotic roads. Imagine a stretch of the river where people could spend time with their families, to breathe and relax from the polluted wind and air and the enclosures of gray concrete towers. Imagine the river as a source of clean drinking water for the city to manage and preempt annual water crises from happening. Imagine this river to be a home for different species of birds to wade and roost for people to appreciate the rich wildlife found in our country. Imagine this river to be clean — a dream we can only wish for in our lifetime.

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PUSONG PANALO

ni **Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas III**

NITO lamang Martes at Miyerkoles, ika-19 at ika-20 ng Nobyembre, ay naganap sa One Esplanade, Pasay City ang ika-12 Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week sa pangunguna ng Climate Change Commission of the Philippines (CCC).

Nakapaloob sa pagdiriwang na ito ang mga

aktibidad kagaya ng ika-3 National Convention on Climate Change Adaptation, ang Ctrl+S Now: A Print Exhibition on Climate Change Awareness and Action, at ang Making Climate Finance Count: Increasing Flows for Adaptation.

Ayon kay Secretary Emmanuel M. De Guzman, pinuno ng CCC, nakahanda ang ahen-

SA PAGDIRIWANG NG 'GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSCIOUSNESS WEEK'

siya sa darating na taon upang pangunahan ang transisyon ng ating bansa tungo sa low-carbon at climate-resilient development.

Si Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda naman, na siyang awtor ng Climate Change Act na bumuo sa CCC 10 taon na ang nakalilipas, ay nagbigay rin ng kanyang mensahe. Ayon sa kanya, magkakaroon ng karagdagang plantilla positions para sa CCC.

Nagbigay rin si

Legarda ng mahalagang mensahe tungkol sa climate change. Aniya, narating na natin ang point of no return. Kailangan umanong umaksiyon upang mabuhay, dahil kung mananatili tayo sa dati at hindi kikilos ay kamatayan ang siguradong naghihintay. Ibinigay na umano ng siyensiya ng klima (climate science) ang mga posibilidad para sa ating lahat sa ating pagharap sa mga epekto ng climate change.

Malinaw ang pagiging kagyat at mahalaga ng isyung ito para sa kaligtasan ng tao. Dito sa Filipinas, kailangang magkaroon ng pagkakaisa ang lahat upang sama-samang umaksiyon para mailigtas ang ating kalikasan. Mula pamahalaan hanggang sa indibiduwal, may kanya-kanya tayong papel na dapat gampanan. Sama-sama tayo para maghanda sa mga paparating ng epekto ng climate change.



2 Pasig River boats to sail next month

Two boats that would soon ferry commuters patronizing the Pasig River ferry system as a mode of transport in Metro Manila will be launched next month, Mayor Vico Sotto said.

One of the two 57-seater ferry boats named "M/B Mutya ng Pasig 1" was recently tested at Pasig River, the main waterway that runs through several cities in the metropolis.

In a Facebook post, Sotto concurred with the idea of using ferry boats to transport commuters in

Metro Manila via Pasig River.

However, the mayor lamented that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the operator of the Pasig River Ferry Service, does not have enough boats to fully operate the ferry system.

According to Sotto, there are only around two ferry boats in operation.

"Dahil dito, at alinsunod din sa direktiba ni Pangulo Duterte, nakikipag-ugnayan ang Pamahalaan ng Pasig sa MMDA para sa pagpapalano at pagpapatakbo nito,"

Sotto said Wednesday night.

If everything goes well, Sotto said that the Pasig City government will procure more river ferry boats.

The Pasig River Ferry Service, which began its operation in 2007, cruises the stretch of Pasig River from Pasig City to Intramuros in Manila.

Senator Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara recently urged the Duterte administration to provide commuters with an alternative mode of public transport in Metro Manila, such as the Pasig River ferry system.

According to Angara, 11 out of 14 ferry stations situated along Pasig River are operational. **(Jhon Casinas)**



Semirara Mining appeals suspension

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) has appealed the suspension slapped by the Department of Energy (DoE) for violating its rules on coal trading.

"We would like to notify the exchange that SMPC filed its motion for reconsideration with the DoE yesterday, November 20," the Consunji-led company said in a disclosure on Thursday.

"We would also like to stress that the DoE resolution dated October 15, 2019 is not yet final and executory. Our pending motion temporarily defers the implementation of the coal trading suspension, which would allow SMPC to continue serving its coal customers," it added.

The Energy department suspended its coal operations for one month transacting with Gold Anchorage, in which the latter is an unaccredited coal trader.

It was also fined P1.735 million for unabated and continuous coal trading despite the suspension of its accreditation.

The DoE found that Semirara Mining violated Sections 7.2 and 3 of Department Circular DC2012-05-0006, also called "Guidelines on the Accreditation of Coal Traders and Registration of Coal End-Users."

The company was also ordered by the DoE to suspend the mining activities on Semirara Island, Antique after a mudslide on October 2 killed one person after being reported missing.

Semirara Mining said it is currently "completing the requirements to comply with the conditions" and that it intends "to reply to the DoE by Friday, November 22 to address their requirements."

"Estimated timetable of resumption of normal operations. Upon receipt of our submitted documents, the DoE shall evaluate our submissions for approval. We estimate that this will take around 15 days. However, this timetable could change depending on the review process of the DoE," it added.

JORDEENE B. LAGARE



Semirara Mining appeals coal trading suspension, P1.8-M fine

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) has asked the Energy department to reconsider its decision suspending the Con-sunji-led company's coal trading for a month and imposing a fine of P1.735 million, it told the stock exchange on Thursday.

"We would like to notify the Exchange that SMPC filed its Motion for Reconsideration with the [Department of Energy, DoE] yesterday, November 20," it said in a disclosure.

A DoE resolution dated Oct. 15, 2019 found the company in violation of Department Circular No. DC2012-05-0006 or the Guidelines on the Accreditation

of Coal Traders and Registration of Coal End-Users.

The one-month suspension was imposed on the company for violating Section 7.2 of the circular due to its coal trading or transaction with Gold Anchorage Stevedoring and Arrastre Services, which is an unaccredited coal trader, except deliveries of SMPC-owned power plants and other local power plants with existing coal supply agreements.

The fine was for violating Section 3 of the circular due to unabated and continuous coal trading despite suspension of its accreditation.

SMPC said it would like to stress that the DoE resolution is not yet final and executory. — **Victor V. Saulon**



Semirara asks DOE to reconsider coal trading suspension

By Alena Mae S. Flores

SEMI RARA Mining and Power Corp. appealed with the Department of Energy, which imposed a one-month selective coal trading suspension and fines against the integrated mining company.

"We would also like to stress that the DOE Resolution dated Oct. 15, 2019 is not yet final and executory. Our pending motion temporarily defers the implementation of the coal trading suspension, which would allow SMPC to continue serving its coal customers," SMPC said in a disclosure to the stock exchange.

The department imposed a one-month suspension against SMPC for allegedly violating Section 7.2 of the circular due to coal trading or transaction with Gold Anchorage, an unaccredited coal trader "except deliveries of SMPC-owned

power plants and other local power plants with existing coal supply agreements."

SMPC earlier disclosed that it supplied 4,768.73 metric tons of Semirara coal to Gold Anchorage on May 23 as trial shipment. The buyer issued assurances to SMPC that it had submitted and applied for a coal accreditation certificate with the DOE on April 5.

Under the rules, the DOE will either issue a certificate of accreditation or reject the application.

On shipment date, the buyer was unable to submit the said accreditation as it was still pending with the DOE. SMPC said it then discontinued its supply and any trading with the said buyer.

SMPC said on the DOE suspension order dated Nov. 14, 2019, it was completing the requirements to comply with

the conditions. "We intend to reply to the DOE by Friday," it said.

"Upon receipt of our submitted documents, the DOE shall evaluate our submissions for approval. We estimate that this will take around 15 days. However, this timetable could change depending on the review process of the DOE. We wish to assure the investing public that we are focused on complying with all the directives of the DOE so we can resume operations at the soonest possible time," it said.

SMPC stopped its coal mining operations after receiving an order from the DOE to suspend all mining activities covered by coal operating contract no. 5 based on the results of the investigation on the mudflow incident in Semirara Island, Antique province last month.

The DOE said the suspension would



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CLASSIFIEDS

CAGDIANAO MINING, SURIGAO ROTARY CONNECT WITH 1 MILLION TREES

It's becoming a challenge to find open areas in a highly-urbanized metropolis like Surigao City where one can plant trees. But the Rotarians in the City led by the Rotary Club of Metro Surigao Foundation, Inc., committed to plant 1M trees and their initial experience had them wanting for more.

Together with family members and friends – with the theme “Rotary Connects the World” – Rotarians from Surigao City, travelled recently to the adjacent Dinagat Islands to a tree-planting adventure in a mined-out area at Cagdianao Mining Corporation (CMC).

“In one day alone, all 139 of us, including our children, relatives and friends, planted 2200 trees under an hour. We felt we could do more. We felt we connected with the world indeed. It was very motivating,” relayed Rotary Club of Surigao City President, Louie Chua.

When people hear of a “tree-planting activity” they may think it all but fun and, to some, one for a good ‘FB-moment’ but there has to be a clear purpose for such activity to even take off.

First, it was a huge task to



TWO THOUSAND TREES UNDER AN HOUR – Photo shows Rotarians from Surigao City led by the Rotary Club of Metro Surigao Foundation, Inc; REACT Miners; CARAGA Regional Science High School Faculty; Alpha Theta Omega Fraternity and Sorority; and Saint Paul University Surigao Engineering Students.

gather a group of professionals and various individuals who are among the busiest and most active members of the community – doctors, lawyers, teachers, housewives, entrepreneurs, government employees and the likes – to donate time and efforts to join a trip just to plant

trees. After all, Dinagat Island is an hour away by boat from Surigao City and to reach the CMC mine site is an additional hour by land plus another boat ride.

CMC is spearheading this ‘tree-planting adventure’ to showcase the mining company’s Environment Protection

Enhancement Program (EPEP) and to help build a community of tree-planters by enjoining equally enthusiastic environmentalists such as the members of the Rotary Club to come to the mine site to plant trees.

CMC Resident Mine Manager, Engr. Arnilo Milaor, says



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Nickel Asia Corp (NAC) and all its subsidiaries, which includes CMC, is mandated to initiate these kinds of collaborative efforts with other organizations and government agencies.

"This is in relation with the National Greening Program of the government. We are opening the doors to Cagdianao Mining for everyone to experience the operations of a responsible mining company and to be educated on the benefits of regularly planting trees," explained Milaor.

He added that CMC has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Rotary Club of Metro Surigao and has committed to provide the Rotarians what they need especially healthy planting materials and access to areas waiting to be planted with all sorts of trees.

CMC also provided the group with a thorough orientation on the mining company's rehabilitation programs in Dinagat Islands and in-depth lessons on climate change adaptations, biodiversity conservation, reforestation, food security for the communities, among other things, as mandated by

law.

"The Rotarians are leading by example. The experience was a crusade of sort that required each of the participants to go out of his/her way and make time to plant a tree at least once every month. This is one way we can help direct the course of the future to a better and healthier environment," explained Dr. Romulo Ybiernas, CMC's Resident Physician, who is also an active Rotarian.

There are 4 Rotary Clubs in Surigao City under District 3860 - Rotary Club of Metro Surigao; Rotary Club of Central Surigao; Rotary Club of Surigao City; and Rotary Club of Surigao Midtown Jewels.

Phoebe Alac, CMC Environmental Manager, said that there are a lot of complex lessons on the benefits of regularly planting trees and a lot more lessons about responsible mining that can only be taught by experience.

"That is why we want as many members of the communities as possible to visit to see for themselves how CMC is successfully rehabilitating the areas in an active mine site," she said.



Turtle hatchlings released at Pico de Loro Cove

SM Prime's premier eco-tourism development, Hamilo Coast in Nasugbu, Batangas continues to be a haven for sea turtles.

Out of five marine turtle species residing in the Philippines, three can be found in the area – the Olive Ridley, Green and Hawksbill.

Approximately 138 newly hatched Olive Ridley turtles were most recently released as of November to the coastal waters of Pico Beach in Hamilo Coast.

These are always much-celebrated events as the Olive Ridley turtle is the most abundant yet the most vulnerable due to poaching and pollution. More turtle nests are expected to hatch by the yearend.

Data from the Hamilo Coast Sustainability Team shows that an average of five nest sightings are recorded per year, particularly during the hatching season of August to December.

Actual nests are indicated by tracks left by the mother turtle. Unfortunately, these traces are easily washed away by rain and waves, hence locating these nests can sometimes be difficult.

According to the Hamilo Coast Sustainability Team, the coves of Hamilo Coast are nesting grounds for these turtles to lay their eggs.

The team proactively monitors and protects these nests until the eggs hatch and the hatchlings are immediately released.



Out to the sea. Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings dash to the sea upon release to the coastal waters of Pico Beach in Hamilo Coast.

Sadly, only one in 1,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood. Turtles mistake plastic for jellyfish, a mainstay in their normal diet. As a result, many turtles die due to suffocation and indigestion - truly another

strong argument against throwing trash indiscriminately and using single-use plastics.

Providing a safe haven for nesting turtles is but one of the many sustainability initiatives of Hamilo Coast. Other

programs to sustain and conserve the marine environment include the declaration of select coves as Marine Protected Areas, marine mammal rescue training, and cultivation of true giant clams.



WHAT'S BEHIND THE DISPLAY OF CHINESE FLAG IN BORACAY?

WHAT will be your reaction if you are a Filipino on vacation in Boracay and all of a sudden you see China's flag?

At least two photos went viral on social media recently after a Chinese tourist displayed the Chinese flag in Boracay. Natividad Bernardino, chief of the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group, said they have yet to determine the motive behind the act, and that it is a "different story" if there was malicious intent.

We all know that China wants to take control of some of the islands, reefs and other features in the West Philip-

pine Sea because of their vast economic resources and strategic location. It reportedly wants to secure methane hydrate in the area, and has even built military installations on seized islands.

It is for these reasons that we cannot avoid feeling irritated when reports like the display of a Chinese flag in Boracay surface. We hope China would not threaten the peace and stability in our own territory, or disrupt other countries from the exercise of their sovereign rights.

JACK JAMES MANTO,
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REGIONS BRIEFS

Gasoline-run tricycles gone soon in Boracay

ILOILO CITY—By January next year, electric tricycles will service residents and tourists on Boracay Island as the local government starts implementing a program to phase out gasoline-run tricycles in the resort island in Malay, Aklan. Acting Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista directed the municipal transportation office to implement the phaseout from Nov. 19 until the end of the year, citing municipal council resolutions supporting long-term environmental protection measures on the island. A Department of Environment and Natural Resources study had identified tricycles as a main contributor in air and noise pollution in Boracay. At least 415 gasoline-run tricycles and more than 200 electric tricycles are operating on the island. The Land Transportation Office is pushing for the reduction of the number of vehicles to help decongest the island. Local government data showed that 5,122 private and public utility vehicles were registered on the island as of 2017. —NESTOR BURGOS JR.



BAY'S BOUNTY Militants feast on seafood taken from Manila-Bay as they gather in front of the DENR office in Quezon City on World Fisheries Day. The group was protesting against bay reclamation projects that threaten marine life. —LYN RILLON

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TODO ang maingay na away ukol sa droga ng mga awtoridad sa mga araw na ito.

Ang away ay sa pagitan ng mga nasa administrasyong Duterte at ang mga kritiko.

Humantong na ang kontrobersya mismo sa pagitan nina Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte at Vice President Leni Robredo.

Unang nagkaroon ng kiskisan sa pagitan ni Robredo at ni General Aaron Aquino, ang co-chairman nito sa Inter-Committee on Anti-Illegal Drugs.

Sumunod dito ang nais ni Philippine National Police officer-in-charge Archie Gamboa na sa advocacy at rehabilitation na lang magkonsentroyt si Robredo sa halip na makisawsaw ito sa giyera sa droga na larangang ginagalawan ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency at PNP.

Nakisawsaw na rin ang mga kongresman at senador at nagkaroon ng mga pinapanigang pwersa sa giyera sa droga.

KUNG AYAW, DIRETSAHIN NA

Nanghahamon si Robredo kina Pang. Digong na diretsahin na siya kung gusto pa siyang magpatuloy bilang bahagi ng ICAD.

Ito'y sa harap ng mga pahayag ng Malakanayang na duda na ang Pangulo sa pinaggagawa ni Robredo simula't simula ng kanyang pagupo.

Kabilang sa mga kinukwestiyon ng Pangulo na aksyon ni Robredo ang agad nitong pakikipagpulong sa mga dayuhan para maresolba ang problema sa droga.

Nakipagpulong ito sa mga opisyal ng US Embassy, sa mga taga-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime at sa iba pang dayuhan, gaya ng isang ex-official ng Human Rights Watch bilang kanyang adviser.

Kaduda-duda rin umano ang pagpipilit ni Robredo na napasakamay niya ang lahat ng sensitibong datos sa giyera sa droga.

Para sa Pangulo, may mga sensitibong usapin sa giyera na kung napasakamay ng kung sino-sino lang ay



ULTIMATUM

Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

UNAHIN ANG MGA NAKAKALAMIDAD

maaaring maging banta sa seguridad ng bansa.

Tila mahirap intindihin ang mga ito ni Robredo na kung lilimiin nang husto ay konektado sa pagiging higit na dependent o pag-sandal nito sa mga dayuhan sa halip na sa mga katuwang nito sa pamahalaan.

Ngayon ay may gana pa siyang manghamon sa administrasyon kung ayaw sa kanya o hindi bilang "katuwang" daw sa giyera sa droga?

Ang masasabi lang ng ating Uzi, kung nailinitan at nauusukan ang isang tao sa kusina at ayaw nito roon, lumabas na lang siya.

NAKAKALAMIDAD INTINDIHIN

Sa gitna ng mga away-away sa kapangyarihan sa droga, milyon-milyong katao ang naghihirap at nagugutom dahil sa mga kalamidad na dumarating.

Hindi tinatantanan ng mga bagyo ang Northern Luzon at ngayo'y nakalupasay sa hirap, gutom at kawalan ng magandang kinabukasan ang mga taga-roon.

Milyong katao rin ang mga biktima ng lindol sa Mindanao.

Napakahirap din ang kanilang kalagayan, lalo na ang libo-libong nawalan ng tahanan o nasiraan nito na kung makabalik man sila ay balot ng mga pangamba dahil sa mga bitak sa kanilang mga tahanan o bitak kaya ng lupa sa kanilang mga kapaligiran.

Ang mga bitak sa kapaligiran sa Cotabato at paanan ng Mt. Apo ay palatandaan ng nakatatakot na kalagayan.

"Yun bang === ano-mang oras o araw ay sasalakayin pa rin sila ng mga lindol na tunay namang mapaminsala sa buhay at ari-arian.

Ngayon naman ay libo-libo na rin ang nangangamba ukol sa posibleng pagputok Bulkang Taal sa lalawigan ng Batangas.

Hindi ba mas magandang pagtuunan ito ng kagyat na pansin sa halip na magpambuno ang mga opisyal sa agawan ng kapangyarihan sa giyera sa droga?

MATAGALANG PERWISYO

Matagalang perwisyo ang inaabot ng mga kinakalamidad

Hindi lang isang araw o linggo.

Bagkus, marami sa mga ito ang aabutin ng maraming buwan at taon bago makabangon at manumbalik sa normal ang kanilang pamumuhay.

Isipin na lang kung gaano magpundar muli ng tahanan ang mga nawasakan ng mga tahanan dahil sa mga lindol, malalakas na hangin at baha.

Isipin din kung gaano katagal makapagipon muli ng puhunan ang mga negosyante, magsasaka at iba pa para sa kanilang puhunan bago maging normal ulit ang lahat?

Ang totoo, nakasasama sa mga kinakalamidad ang mga pagbabangayan ng mga opisyal ng pamahalaan.

Hindi lang kasi maanghang na salita ang maubos kundi maging ang oras ng kanilang serbisyo, pondong bayan at mga pasilidad na kagamitan ng pamahalaan na dapat sanang maiukol sa mga biktima ng kalamidad.

Panahon nang iawasari ang mga bangayan at sa halip, ibuhos ng mga nasa pamahalaan ang paglingap sa mga biktima ng mga mapanirang pwersa ng kalikasan.

Tara na lahat at paglingkurang ang mga labis na nangangailangan ng serbisyong bayan.

Anomang reaksiyon o reklamo, maaaring iparing sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.