

DATE : 12-20-19

DAY : Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

Matter (PM) 2.5 or finer particles
that are 2.5 micrometers or less in
diameter.



DENR chief bares protection efforts on PH bodies of water

By Joel dela torre

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu has assured that the country's bodies of water are protected pursuant to the provisions of the law or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

One of the important provisions of the law is the designation of Water Quality Management Areas (WQMAs) using appropriate physiographic units such as watersheds and river basins to effectively enforce the law and improve the quality of water bodies.

"If we can rehabilitate Boracay and Manila Bay, we can give the same protection to all water bodies in the country by strictly adhering to our annual target and even going beyond it," Cimatu explained.

As of October this year, Cimatu said the DENR was able to monitor 45 priority water bodies and 39 priority recreational water bodies, both representing 100 percent

of the annual targets.

This year, the DENR formulated, updated and monitored 36 action plans related to the operation of WQMAs.

"We hope that through these action plans, we will be able to come up with new WQMAs in the future for the greater protection and regulation on the development of river systems nationwide," Cimatu said.

In line with the implementation of RA 8749 or the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, Cimatu said a total of 101 air quality monitoring stations (AQMS) are already operational nationwide.

These stations measure pollutants such as total suspended particulates, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide.

Cimatu said the DENR also monitored the emissions of 14,538 firms out of the annual target of 15,989. The agency also achieved its 2019 target of updating and implementing 22 Airshed Action Plans nationwide, he added.



Pagbuti ng water, air monitoring tinukoy ni Cimatu

PARA maprotektahan ang kalikasan higit pang pinaigting ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang pag-monitor sa water at air quality sa iba't ibang lugar sa bansa ngayong taong 2019.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, bukod sa Manila Bay at Boracay, tiniyak ng ahensya na nabibigyan ng proteksyon ang iba pang water bodies sa bansa base na rin sa nakasaad sa mga probisyon ng Republic Act 9275 o ang Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

Sinabi pa ni Cimatu, nitong Oktubre ay nakapag-monitor ang DENR ng 45 priority water bodies at 39 priority recreational water bodies na kumakatawan sa 100 porsiyento ng target para sa 2019.

Isa naman sa mahalagang probisyon ng RA 9275 ang pagtalaga ng Water Quality Management Areas gamit ang physiographic units kabilang na rito ang watersheds at river basins upang epektibong maipatupad ang batas at mapabuti ang kalidad ng water bodies.

Ngayong taon ay nakapagbalangkas, nakapag-update at nakapag-monitor na ang DENR ng 36 action plans na may kaugnayan sa operasyon ng WQMAS.

Samantala, sa implementasyon naman ng RA 8749 o ang Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, sinabi ni Cimatu na 101 air quality monitoring stations ang gumagana na sa iba't ibang lugar sa buong bansa.

Nakapag-monitor na rin umano ang DENR ng emissions ng 14,538 na kompanya mula sa target nitong 15,989 kompanya. Nakamit din ng ahensya ang 2019 target nitong updating at implementasyon ng 22 Airshed Action Plans. **SANTI CELARIO**



Boracay's stakeholders hope to boost '20 bookings

By MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO

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Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR

STAKEHOLDERS in Boracay Island will be preparing a marketing plan, with the help of the Department of Tourism (DOT), to help promote the island to key markets abroad.

Their pitch could get some boost from this latest development: *Condé Nast Traveler* has just included Boracay in its list of "30 Best Winter Vacations to Take This Season." The prestigious travel publication noted: "[This] itty-bitty speck [just under 4 square miles] in the Western Philippines

SEE "BORACAY," A2

Boracay. . .

CONTINUED FROM A1

is as close to a tropical idyll as you'll find in Southeast Asia, with gentle coastlines and Instagram-worthy sunsets. Fold in a thriving nightlife scene, and you have one of the top tourist spots in the region."

This developed as hotels and resorts on the island have reported lower guest bookings even toward New Year's Eve, which is considered a "super peak" season, said Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) Jose C. Clemente III. "The resorts were saying that they have lower arrivals for Christmas and even for New Year, for December 31, they are down from previous years," he told the BUSINESSMIRROR, after meeting with stakeholders from the island on December 10.

The resorts failed to submit, however, data and figures to back up their claim of decreased bookings.

Clemente said many factors are behind the lower arrivals on Boracay toward the Christmas-New Year period. Among these are "less flights [to Kalibo and Caticlan], airfares have gone up...like there were cancellations of charters earlier this year, so the Chinese tourists were put off by this." **(See, "C.A.B. changes mind, allows charter flights anew to Boracay gateways," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, July 17, 2019.)**

Data from the DOT-Region 6 (Western Visayas) showed total tourist arrivals reached 1.6 million, of which 729,415 were foreigners, in the nine months to September 2019. Total arrivals were 4.6 percent higher than the 1.53 million in the same period in 2017, of which 730,511 were foreigners.

Total tourism receipts (from foreign and domestic travelers) reached some P46 billion from January to September 2019, up 8.223 percent over the P42.5-billion receipts in the same period in 2017. No data was made available for just inbound receipts.

Meanwhile, on Clemente's prodding,

the stakeholders agreed in a meeting on December 16, this time with DOT officials, to go on a "destination-specific road show," to push just Boracay Island, starting next year. If the DOT

agrees to support such a road show, "The stakeholders said they were willing to kick in some funding to match whatever DOT is contributing."

He said the stakeholders hope to finish gathering the inputs and suggestions, which TCP will consolidate for submission to Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat. "We hope we can submit this [proposed marketing plan] by January," he asserted.

Clemente also said the stakeholders are now considering expanding the markets to be tapped instead of focusing on the Chinese market, which has driven the arrival numbers on the island.

"They can tap Japan again; the Philippines just received the Excellent Partner Award from the Japanese. We can leverage on that," he noted. The award was given to the DOT during the Japan Tourism Expo in October, in recognition of the agency's role in rehabilitating Boracay Island.

Clemente, who is also president of Rajah Tours Philippines, said Europe is still a viable market. "Europeans were the first to discover Boracay in the 1980s, but look where they are now? The Germans are ranked 10th among Boracay's source markets."

He added, "We never took Boracay off our offerings"—tour operators always sell the island when they join travel fairs abroad. But he noted the resorts have not adjusted their prices, and except for a handful, no longer join the travel fairs.

For one, Boracay resorts still impose surcharges during the so-called peak and super peak seasons. "They were saying they received cancellations also from the Chinese market for the Chinese New Year. So why are they still imposing a surcharge?" he asked.

"Hopefully they've seen what happens when they put all their eggs in one basket," Clemente pointed out, referring to Boracay's reliance on the Chinese market. Published reports noted that mainland Chinese tourists are traveling less to Southeast Asian countries, with China Travel News saying trips to Thailand fell by 4.31 percent, and to Vietnam by 0.82 percent in the first five months of 2019. It was a complete reversal from the strong growths of 27.38 percent and 37 percent in the same period last year, respectively.

In the Philippines, arrivals from China remain strong, having jumped 41.5 percent to 1.5 million from January to October 2019, accelerating from the 30.7-percent increase to 1.06 million in the same period in 2018.

NOTICE OF DEED EXTRA-JUDICIAL PARTITION WITH WAIVER OF RIGHTS

Notice of Deed of Extra-Judicial Partition with Waiver of Rights and Special Power of Attorney in favor of **MARY ANN PAZ TURINGAN** executed by the Heirs of **FELICISIMO MAPAGU TURINGAN** dated December 6, 2019 notarized by Atty. Bienvenido N. Quiñones, notary public for and in the City of Manila and entered into his Notarial Registry as Doc. No. 479; Page No. 96; Book No. XLIII; Series of 2019



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Du30 wants to revisit 1997 water agreement

By MJ Blancaflor

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte would not step out from the presidency without resolving the onerous provisions in the 1997 water concession agreement, Malacañang said Thursday.

Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo said the President, during their discussion Wednesday night, renewed his desire to talk with those who were involved in the crafting of the deal.

"Last night, he repeated that he still wants to talk with lawyers of the government, private lawyers. 'I still want to hear why they allowed this kind of treason,'" Panelo told reporters.

The President would make an announcement on Jan. 6 next year on the matter, according to Panelo.

Sought for details, Panelo said he would not want to preempt the President.

"You can be assured that the stand of the President remains unchanged; I will not preempt the President," he said.

President Duterte has repeatedly lambasted the two water firms over "onerous provisions" in the 1997 water concession agreement which he said were unfair to the government and Filipino consumers.

The contract carries a provision that says the government should pay the water concessionaires for their losses that result from the actions of the state regulator during the effectivity of contract.

The government also cannot interfere with water rates, as stated in the agreement.

These provisions allowed the two companies to take the Philippine government to a Singapore-based arbitral tribunal which ruled that the state had to pay Maynilad P3.4 billion and Manila Water P7.4 billion for their respective losses.

On Dec. 10, the two firms sent a letter to Duterte, stating that they agreed to revisit and amend the provisions which earned the ire of the Chief Executive.

The letters were signed by business tycoons Manuel Pangilinan and Fernando Zobel de Ayala.



Para sa Pasko at Bagong Taon **MAYNILAD, MANILA WATER MAY DAGDAG-ALOKASYON**



INANUNSIYO nitong Huwebes na daragdagan ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa Maynilad at Manila Water galing sa Angat dam para umiksi o mawala pansamantala ang rotating water interruption sa Pasko at Bagong Taon lalo't kadalasang tumataas ang demand sa holidays.

Ayon sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB), inaprubahan nila ang alokasyong 2 cubic meters per second para sa mga water concessionaire sa Pasko't Bagong Taon.

Kaunting dagdag lang ang kayang pag-

bigyan ng NWRB dahil kailangan ding tipirin ang suplay ng Angat Dam hanggang summer ng susunod na taon, lalo pa nga't malabong umabot sa target na 212 meters ang water level nito bago matapos ang 2019.

"Hindi naman ganoon kalaki ang impact sa supply pero, makatutulong this Christmas season kung ma-minimize ang water interruption," ani NWRB executive director Seville David, Jr.

Pero paglilinaw ng Maynilad, kahit may dagdag alokasyon ay malayo pa rin ito sa normal allocation nilang 48

cubic meters per second.

Pero kahit paano, may positibong epekto pa rin ito.

"It's either po ma-shorten po namin 'yung kasalukuyang nararansang rotating water interruption ng customers or hopefully totally mawala sa 4 na holidays na meron tayo," ani Ronald Padua, head ng Maynilad water supply operations.

Giit ng water concessionaires, tuloy ang rotational interruption nila pero ia-adjust din nila ang suplay batay sa pangangailangan dahil marami na rin namang nakabakasyon sa probinsiya.



Firm seeks gov't nod for 2 reclamation projects

400 hectares off Manila Bay, 335 ha for Sangley airport project

By Doris Dumlao-Abadilla
@Philbizwatcher

Integrated property and infrastructure developer DM Wenceslao & Associates Inc. (DMW) has proposed two massive reclamation projects, including a 400-hectare reclamation off Manila Bay fronting its flagship estate Aseana City and the neighboring Philippine

Amusement & Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) Entertainment City.

The other proposal is for the reclamation of 335 ha of offshore island in Sangley in preparation for the development of the Sangley International Airport.

Based on proposals submitted to the government through the Philippine Reclamation Authority, the government is ex-

pected to receive 200 ha at zero cost out of the two reclamation projects.

The proposal in Parañaque is seen to serve as an extension of the previous agreements that the government had with DMW, where the latter was given rights on the frontage of its completed reclamation project, DMW disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"We look forward to continuing our work with the government to strengthen the country's development activities," DMW chair Delfin Wenceslao Jr. said.

"This 400-ha reclamation project is in line with our thrust to contribute to nation-building. Today, DMW's completed reclamation project in Parañaque City houses nu-

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FROM B1

Parañaque City houses numerous entertainment, gaming and tourism destinations which have become a key driver of growth in the country. It is where Aseana City and Pagcor Entertainment City now stand and

where the recently opened Ayala Malls Manila Bay is located."

The proposed project in Sangley, Cavite, is undergoing review by the Office of the President, the departments of Transportation and of Finance, the disclosure said.

"We look forward to demonstrate once again our expertise in land reclamation. Over the last 50 years, we have reclaimed more than 2,400,000 square meters of land across the Philippines. We are pleased to draw on that experience to

successfully deliver and safely execute these projects," added Wenceslao.

DMW is an integrated property developer with expertise in land reclamation, construction and real estate development. It is the master

developer and primary owner of Aseana City, a development project with a total land area of 107.5 hectares located along Manila Bay.

Apart from reclaiming more than 2.4 million sqm of land since 1965, DMW has

leased or developed 250,000 sqm of land and buildings, and completed more than 140 construction and infrastructure projects, including large, complex government developments throughout the Philippines. INQ

Stop whale shark feeding in Bohol, gov't urged

Environmental groups say tourist activity in Lila town disrupts sea creatures' hunting behavior, puts them in harm's way

By Leo Udtohan
and Jhesset O. Enano
@Team_Inquirer

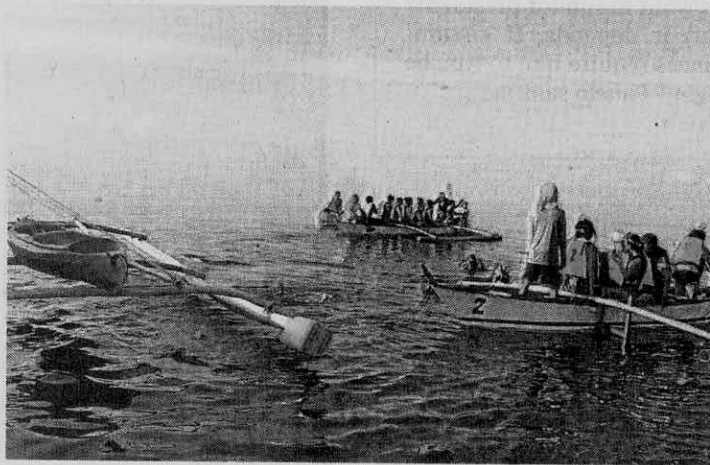
LILA, BOHOL—Environmental groups appealed to the Department of Tourism, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, and the provincial and local governments in Bohol province to prohibit whale shark feeding in Lila town, and instead promote sustainable tourism practices in the area.

Save Sharks Network Philippines (SSNP) said photos and videos of whale shark feeding circulated online last month. The activity was reportedly part of a joint project of a private investor and the local government.

In a separate online signature campaign launched by Bohol Eco Alliance, it identified the new tourism attraction as the "Taug Whale Shark Watching and Snorkeling" in Barangay Taug, which reportedly started soft operations in November.

The campaign, which called on the Bohol government to issue an executive order prohibiting ecological trapping of marine wildlife by the act of feeding and luring, gathered nearly 3,500 signatures as of Thursday.

Free the Whale Sharks Coalition-Bohol (FWSCB) said the practice would not only dimin-



NATHAN MANTUA/CONTRIBUTOR

NEWEST ATTRACTION Whale watching and snorkeling, the newest attraction in Lila, Bohol, has become controversial due to reports of tourists feeding whale sharks.

ish the whale sharks' ability to hunt, but would also put the "gentle giants," known here as "balilan," at risk of getting hurt.

SSNP said conditioning whale sharks to approach boats might make them susceptible to injuries and poaching.

No feeding

But Philip Quiño, one of the tour operators, denied that the activity involved feeding.

"What is going on here is just whale shark watching and snorkeling. The whales are free to go and to hunt for food," he said.

The presence of six to 13 whale sharks in the waters off Lila has enticed tourists to vis-

it the coastal village of Taug to interact with the sea creatures.

Foreign tourists pay P1,000 per person while locals shell out P500. Local paddlers accompany at least 10 tourists on a boat and they swim around a designated interaction area, which is about 30 meters from the shoreline. The activity is open from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m.

At least 130 tourists have "encountered" the whales in Lila since the activity started two weeks ago, reports said.

But lawyer Alma Aparece, convener of FWSCB, however, said their reports indicated that tourists were still feeding the whale sharks.

"There are many things and contentions that they would really like us to believe. But we would still would like to appeal to authorities to stop the feeding at all costs," Aparece said.

Exploitation

In its open letter to government agencies, FWSCB said the practice of feeding whale sharks should not be encouraged and replicated.

"In a country where rules and regulations are difficult to implement, we do not want Bohol to be another example of what not to do and what not to be," the group said.

Marine conservationists warned against the tourism attraction, citing a similar controversy in Oslob town, Cebu province. Experts said that as the whale shark tourism industry grew, researchers observed changes in the sharks' behavior and physiology, as well as the practice's adverse impact on the local environment.

"Feeding of whale sharks for economic purposes is a clear form of exploitation and harms ecological balance in Bohol or anywhere it is practiced," SSNP said in its statement.

The largest of all fish species, whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) are classified as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. INQ



Metal production nears P100 B in 9 months

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The value of metallic minerals produced in the country increased by seven percent to almost P100 billion as the Philippines continues to benefit from the ore export ban in Indonesia.

Latest data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) showed that aggregate value of metal production rose 6.5 percent to P99.58 billion.

According to the MGB, the nickel ore export ban in Indonesia is expected to boost prices which will be a welcome development for the country's nickel producers.

"This will naturally increase the

demand for our nickel ore. Due to China's limited nickel resource, most of their nickel ore requirement comes from the Philippines and Indonesia," the MGB said.

Indonesia earlier announced an export ban of nickel ore with nickel content below 1.7 percent. Indonesia is currently the world's largest nickel-producing country with 560,000 metric tons followed by the Philippines with 340,000 MT.

Direct shipping nickel ore and mixed nickel-cobalt sulfides took the spotlight, accounting for P47.36 billion or an increase of 12 percent year-on-year despite the price of nickel declining to

\$6.05 per pound from \$6.13 per pound.

Gold production accounted for 37 percent of the total production value with aggregate earnings rising seven percent to P36.9 billion as output increased to 16,328 kilograms.

Gold metal price accelerated to \$1,362.99 per troy ounce from \$1,283.27 per troy.

Revenues from copper production, which comprises 14 percent of total metal production value, fell eight percent to P14.4 billion despite a 10 percent hike in output to 234,982 dry MT.

The decline was attributed to lower price of copper.

The production value of silver,

meanwhile, increased by eight percent to P644 million amid higher production at three percent to 24,849 kilos.

The remaining one percent of total metallic production or P900 million came from the combined value of other metals such as iron ore and chromite.

The Philippine Gold Processing and Refining Corp. was the country's major gold producer during the nine-month period.

For nickel direct shipping ore, Taganito Mining Corp. in Surigao del Norte reported the highest output with 65,694 MT.

MGB said mine output was generally sluggish during the period as

most nickel mines reported production shortfall, while some mining operations are still under care and maintenance program and suspended status.

Meanwhile, Toledo Copper operations in Cebu dominated the copper production with a 65 percent share of the total output.

To date, the country hosts 50 operating metallic mines consisting of 31 nickel, 10 gold with silver as co-product, three copper with gold and silver as co-products, three chromite, three iron, and two nickel plant and two gold plants.

These are in addition to the numerous small-scale gold mining operations across the country.



Govt expedites small-scale mining regulation

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The government is intensifying the regulation of small-scale mining operations in the country, particularly in monitoring undisposed residual stockpiles outside mining sites as it continues to revamp the extractive industry.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through attached agency Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), recently issued an administrative order that will speed up the environmental restoration both during and after mining operations by a Minahang Bayan.

A Minahang Bayan is a government-regulated cooperative of small-scale miners organized in a certain area or region.

Under the new DAO, small-scale mining operations will

now have to meet stricter conditions in the disposal of residual stockpiles, or ores previously extracted but not yet disposed during the mining contract.

The disposal will be implemented under a required environmental management plan which miners must submit to report their environmental management objectives and their commitment to protect and rehabilitate the disturbed environment during disposition of residual stockpiles.

The latest move of MGB follows a multi-step campaign to increase the regulation of small-scale mining, in addition to stricter policing of the entire industry.

"We understand the negative view of mining, but we want the public to know that mining is not the same as it was before

the Mining Act of 1995," MGB director Wilfredo Moncano said.

"The MGB is working to improve the regulations on mining, to safeguard environmental protection, and protect the community," he said.

Among the steps taken to increase the regulation of small-scale mining were the provision of incentives in legalizing small-scale mining operations and the fast tracking of application processes for various licenses.

The excise and income taxes for small-scale mining operations were also waived to encourage illegal operators to become legal and adhere to environment and safety standards.

The MGB also facilitated a Global Environment Facility-funded project valued over \$11.7 million to eradicate the usage of mercury in small-scale

gold mining operations early this year.

"The approach really has to be inclusive. Outright prohibition and taxation only pushes small-scale miners into the black market," Moncano said.

He said this was part of a long initiative to improve the mining industry overall under the present administration.

Alongside all these steps, the MGB recently kicked off an information and education campaign to promote responsible mining.

Dubbed #MineResponsibility, the campaign aims to educate the public on the regulation of mining to promote responsible mining practices, and to show that the government is committed to the priority of upholding the safety of people and the environment in the mining industry.



Nickel demand boosts mineral output

By Maria Romero
@tribunephil_mbr

The country's metallic mineral production registered sustained growth during the first three quarters of 2019, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

The agency has attributed this to increased international demand for nickel ore and a decreased source of the commodity as the result of an export ban imposed by Indonesia.

Presently, Indonesia remains the world's largest nickel-producing country recording an output of 560,000 tons in 2018. This was followed by the Philippines, which posted production of 340,000 tons during the same year

Gold retained the second spot with 37 percent or P36.90 billion, while copper took the third position with 14 percent or P14.40 billion.

MGB also said the country's metallic production value posted a 6.5 percent or P6.09 billion growth from P93.48 billion during the first three-quarters last year. It also attributed the growth to the country's continuous nickel ore export to China, which has limited nickel resources.

"Despite the 1.24 percent slip in the average nickel price, nickel direct shipping ore with the aid of its other products (mixed nickel-cobalt sulfide and scandium oxalate) again took the spotlight, accounting for 48 percent or P47.36 billion of the total value during the period," the report said.

Gold retained the second spot with 37 percent or P36.90 billion, while copper took the third position with 14 percent or P14.40 billion.

MGB said the remaining 1 percent was cornered by silver and chromite with P900 million.

Metal prices of nickel, copper and silver all went down. Prices of copper declined from \$3.00 per pound to \$2.72 per pound year-on-year. Nickel, likewise, slipped from \$6.13 per pound to \$6.05 per pound year-on-year.

"It is important to note, however, that the price of nickel has been going up from July to September 2019. In September alone, the price was at \$8.01 per pound," MGB said.

In contrast, prices of yellow metal rose by as much as \$79.72 from \$1,283.27 per troy ounce in 2018 to \$1,362.99 per troy ounce in 2019.



Metal mines output up 6.5% by value

THE value of production generated by metal mines rose 6.5% year-on-year in the first nine months to P99.58 billion, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said.

The MGB said in a statement that nickel accounted for 48% or P47.36 billion of the total for the period, due to larger volumes shipped which offset a decline in nickel prices.

Gold accounted for 37% or P36.9 billion; copper 14% or P14.4 billion; and silver and chromite 1% or P900 million.

Prices of nickel, copper, and silver fell during the period. Gold prices rose by an average of 6% year-on-year to \$1,362.99.

"The nine-month average of copper and nickel declined 9.45% and 1.31%, respectively. Copper price dropped from \$3 per pound to \$2.72 per pound, year-on-year," the MGB said. However, it noted that nickel prices have been rising in the third quarter.

"The nickel ore export ban in Indonesia is expected to boost prices, which will be a welcome development for the country's nickel producers. This will naturally increase the demand for our nickel ore," MGB said.

In 2018, Indonesia was the world's top nickel producer at 560,000 tons, followed by the Philippine with 340,000 tons. Both countries' top market is China.

Top gold producers were Masbate Gold Project of the Philippine Gold Processing and Refining Corp., controlled by the Filiminera Mining Corp., which accounted for 32% or 5,182 kilograms (kg) worth P11.78 billion. This was followed by the Didipio Copper-Gold Project of OceanaGold Philippines, Inc. and the Mindanao Mineral Processing and Refining Corp. of Philsaga Mining Corp. with 2,637 kg and 2,596 kg, respectively.

For silver production, the Apex Maco Operation of Apex Mining Company, Inc. had a 34% share or 8,518kg worth P227.29 million. OceanaGold's Didipio produced 4,093kg worth P107.2 billion.

Carmen Copper Corp.'s Toledo Copper Operation topped copper production with a 65% share or 36,986 metric tons (MT) worth P8.34 billion. OceanaGold's Didipio followed with 10,186 MT, Philex Mining Corp.'s Padcal Copper-Gold operation produced 8,555 MT, and Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. produced 951 MT.

Taganito Mining Corp. was the top nickel producer with 65,659 MT worth P5.87 billion, followed by Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. with 35,684 MT worth P2.81 billion. Both are units of Nickel Asia Corp. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**



EDITORIAL

PH mineral rock stars

HOW do you reward industrial excellence?

By granting perks and other preferential treatment to players who embrace best practices and adhere to, exceed even global standards of performance, including corporate citizenship.

The idea is to shame other laggards or efeb rogues who give industry a bad name.

Consider the star performers in the mining industry whose corporate initiatives go unnoticed at home but are internationally recognized and celebrated.

For instance, three members of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines were adjudged winners at the recently concluded 2nd ASEAN Mineral Awards held in Bangkok, a biennial event that recognizes mineral resource companies for achieving best practices in environmentally and socially sustainable operations.

Coral Bay Nickel Corp., which operates a nickel processing plant in Rio Tuba, Bataraza, Palawan, emerged with the Best Practices award for the Philippines in the Metallic Mineral Processing category.

Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp, also in Bataraza, was named runner-up in the Metallic Mineral Mining category, while Agata Mining Ventures was also named runner-up in the Metallic Mineral Distribution category.

In the non-metallic category, LaFarge Holcim bagged runner-up awards in both the mining and processing categories.

The AMA is an initiative of the Asean mining ministers to recognize best practices in sustainable mineral mining, processing, and distribution among its various member countries.

The Awards, launched in 2017 in Myanmar, saw the Philippines garnering two of the three awards handed out, with Rio Tuba Nickel recognized for best mining practices and Oceana Gold Philippines, Inc. for the best plant.

Since then, the AMA has been expanded to six categories with non-metallic minerals separate from metallic minerals.

"We are extremely pleased that again, Philippine minerals resource companies were recognized for best practices in the various categories," CoMP chairman Gerard Brimo said.

"We hope this recognition will demonstrate that we have world-class mineral operations in our country even as we in COMP strive to raise the bar by subscribing to new global mining standards of excellence, such as the Towards Sustainable Mining initiative. We thank Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu and Mines and Geosciences director Wilfredo Moncano for encouraging us to aspire to higher standards and better ways of doing things, which has undoubtedly raised the performance of the mineral resource development sector in our country," Brimo added.

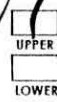
The prestigious award held December 11-13 in Thailand is given to a mining company of an ASEAN member country, recognizing its best practices and being an exemplary model of environmentally and socially-sustainable mining.



Dahilan ng mga pagbaha sa Cagayan Valley

ANO DAW ANG DAHILAN NG BAHSA SA CAGAYAN VALLEY? MALINAW NA DAHILAN YAN SA DEKADANG PANGGAGAHASA SA KABUNDUKAN NG CAGAYAN, GAWANG MGA ILLEGAL LOGGER. DAPAT KASUHAN AT PAGBAYARAN SA PINSALAANG MGA ILLEGAL LOGGER LALO ANG MGA OPISYAL NG LOKAL NA PAMAHALAAN AT DENR. I-SEQUESTER ANG MGA KINITA NILA SA ILLEGAL LOGGING NA PUMINSALA SA MAMAMAYAN NG LALAWIGAN. GANYAN DIN ANG MGA ILIGAL AT OPEN PIT MINING!

- Concerned citizen



TITLE:

NASAKSIHAN ng taumbayan at buong mundo na umiiral ang katarungan sa Pilipinas makaraang ideklarang guilty ang mga pangunahing akusado sa Ampatuan massacre.

Sa desisyon ni Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 221 Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes, nagkasala nang walang kaduda-duda sa multiple murder 44 sa mga akusado samantalang 56 sa mga ito ang napawalang-sala.

Sa 44 na nagkasala, 29 dito ang pangunahing akusado na may parusang reclusion perpetua o pagkakulong na 20 taon at isang araw hanggang 40 taon habang 15 ang itinuring na accessory na makukulong ng 6 taon hanggang mahigit sa 10 taon.

Sa mga pangunahing akusado, nanguna ang magkapatid na ex-Datu Unsay, Maguindanao Mayor Angal Ampatuan Jr. at ex-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Zaldy Ampatuan at dalawang koronel ng Philippine National Police.

Karamihan namang miyembro ng PNP ang naging accessory o may salang mas magaan ang krimen gaya ng pagtatago ng krimen.

Nasa 56 naman ang pinawalang-sala at 54 dito ang pinagdudahan kung kasali sila o hindi sa krimen samantalang dalawa rito na parehong pulis ang napatunayang wala talagang kinalaman sa kaso.

SALUDO SA MEDIAMEN

Maalab na saludo ang iniaalay natin sa 32 mediaman na kinabibilangan nina Jolito Evardo, Daniel Tiamson, Rey Merisco, Ronnie Perante, Jun Legarta, Val Cachuela, Santos "Jun" Gatchalian, Joel Parcon, Noel Decena, John Canibal, Art Betia, Ranie Razon, Archie Ace David, Fernando "Ferdz" Mendoza, Alejandro "Bong" Reblando, Henry Araneta, Napoleon "Nap" Salaysay, Bartolome "Bart" Maravilla, Jhoy Duhay, Andy Teodoro, Ian Subang, Leah Dalmacio, Gina Dela Cruz, Maritess Cablitas, Neneng Montano, Victor Nuñez, at Ronnie I. Dola.

Gayundin ang para kay Reynaldo Momay na hindi pa malinaw ang kaso dahil wala siyang katawan na natagpuan



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

KATARUNGAN SA AMPATUAN MASSACRE HINDI PA TAPOS

at tanging ang pustiso ang natagpuan sa lugar.

Hindi matatawaran ang pag-aalay ng buhay ng mga kapatid nating ito upang magtuloy-tuloy ang ilaw ng pamamahayag sa gitna ng mga kamatayan at panggigipit.

HINDI PA TAPOS ANG LABAN

Ang totoo, hindi pa tapos ang laban para sa katarungan at kalayaan sa pamamahayag.

May motion for reconsideration pa ang mga idineklarang guilty bilang principal at accessory.

Maaaring magkaroon pa rin ng pagbabago o paglaya ng ilan sa mga guilty dahil sa motion for reconsideration.

Kung aakyat ang kaso sa Court of Appeals, lalo na sa Supreme Court, maaari pa rin talagang may pagbabago.

At muli, maaaring may lalaya sa mga napatunayang nagkasala ni Judge Reyes.

Sa kabilang banda, maaaring may maisama namang guilty sa mga pinalaya ni Judge Solis sa bisa ng desisyon ng Court of Appeals o Supreme Court.

Ang matindi pa rito, mga Bro, gaano katagal aabutin ang pinal na desisyon dito?

Ang twin murder na Olalia-Alay-ay ay inabot ng 30 taon habang ang Vizconde massacre ay umaabot naman ng mahigit 20 taon.

HINDI MAGBABAYAD

Kung titingnan ang mga halaga ng babayaran ng mga guilty na iba't ibang danyos, may halagang ilang daang libo para sa isang biktima pero 'yung iba, inaabot na mahigit P20 milyon.

Asahan na nating walang magbabayad sa mga guilty ng danyos hanggang walang pinal na desisyon ng Supreme Court at karanasan na ito.

Sa kaso lang ni Calauan, Laguna Mayor Antonio Sanchez, hanggang ngayon, wala pa ring binibitiwan na kahit singko para sa mga biktima nito na sina Eileen Sarmenta at Allan Gomez.

Ito'y sa kabila ng

Supreme Court decision dito.

Kaya naman, matagal pa bago makamit ang buong hustisya ng mga biktima ng Ampatuan massacre.

Kailangan natin ang pagtutulungan upang maitawid ng mga biktima ang kanilang pang-araw-araw na buhay.

SEGURIDAD

Ang isa pang problema, mga Bro, ay ang kaligtasan ng mga pamilya ng mga biktima.

May nasa 80 pang akusado na pinaghahapan ng batas at hindi pa naiharap sa hukuman.

Maaaring galing dito ang banta sa buhay ng mga pamilya ng mga biktima, lalo't may desisyon nang guilty para sa ilang akusado.

Ayaw ng mga natitirang akusado na makulong din sila at maaaring maisip nilang ubusin na lang ang mga pamilya ng mga biktima.

Pero dapat bantayan din ang mga biktima mula sa kamay ng mga pinalayang akusado.

Anong malay natin?

Kung nangangamba maging si Congressman Toto Mangudadatu mismo sa kanyang buhay, ganito rin ang maaaring kalagayan ng pamilya ng mediamen.

Kasama sa mga pinatay ang misis ni kongresman, kapatid at tiyahin niya, dalawang abogado niya at iba at nadamay na rin ang iba pang naparaan lang sa lugar nang i-checkpoint ang mga ito.

Kung sakali, maaaring tumakbo ang mga pamilya ng mediamen kay Cong. Toto dahil isa itong awtoridad at kasama nilang biktima.

Naniniwala akong hindi tatalikuran ni Cong. Toto ang kanyang tungkuling protektahan ang buhay ng kanyang mga kasamahan.

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Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring ipa-rating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.