

Mining firms in C. Visayas implement programs to protect the environment

By FAYETTE C. RINEN

CEBU CITY, January 3 (PIA) -- Mining firms in Central Visayas, mostly based in Cebu have implemented their own programs aimed at protecting the environment as mandated under the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

Department of Natural Resources and Environment - Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) 7 Director Loreto Alburo said the law requires mining companies to implement environmental protection and enhancement programs (EPEP).

Based on the MGB 7 record, mining firms spent a total of P186.2 million worth of projects related to the protection and enhancement of the environment, Loreto declared.

Environmental protection programs implemented by the mining firms include the rehabilitation of the mined areas and potential land uses of the site as well as environmental protection measures during the actual operation of the mining activity, this is said.

Out of the P186.2 million total EPEP implemented, Carmen Copper Corporation in Toledo City spent the biggest share with P156.7 million followed by Apo Cement Corp. and Apo Land and Quarry Corp. in the City of Naga with P11.2 million.

Taiheiyo Cement Philippines Inc. and Solid Earth Development Corp. in the Municipality of San Fernando in southern Cebu allocated a total of P5.06 million for their environmental protection programs.

Other mining companies that also adopted rehabilitation and enhancement programs for the environment included

the Philippine Mining Service Corp. and Dolomite Mining Corp. in Alcoy, Cebu with P5.9 million; Philippine Mining Service Corp. and Bohol Limestone

Corp. in Garcia-Hernandez town in Bohol with P3.5 million; and P2 million from the JLR Construction and Aggregates Inc. in the City of Naga. (PIA-Cebu)



KAPIHAN: (Top Left) FOR CONVERGENCE. Governor Edgar Chatto receives the Bayanihan Outstanding Partner Award for his support to the convergence of efforts in bringing a new dimension to counter-insurgency: rallying all the support and commitment it can get from all stakeholders. (Top Right) FOR PROSPERITY. 802nd Brigade Commander Col. John Bonafos shares an integrated rural development experts team unleashed in Bohol's 15 barangays to focus on purok development as a way to sustain the gains of peace in Bohol. (Bottom right) PROPOSING THE MOVE. Romeo Teruel presents to the PPOC the formal recommendations from the study which the governor tasked to look into ways where funding state witnesses can include transportation and meal allowances. (Bottom left) LAND ROW again surfaces as Special Investigation Task Group reported they were denied entry of a another lot where a tower rests for non payment of his lot, says PSSupt. Constantino Barot during the recent PPOC meeting. (Bottom center) ALCOHOL AND FIRERACKERS is a dangerous combination, says Fire Officer 1 Vincent Ente during the recent Kapihan sa PIA. BFP then reminds everyone who has firecrackers in their celebration menu to put safety as their operative word to a joyous holidays. (PIABohol)

CV produces the 1st grads of DAR mediators nationwide

By FAYETTE C. RINEN

CEBU CITY, Jan. 2 (PIA) – Central Visayas produced the first graduates of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) trainings nationwide conducted by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

The 37 graduates composed of lawyers, legal officers and municipal agrarian reform officers are now certified ADR mediators after they were given certificates of completion and accreditation as ADR mediators signed by DAR Sec. Virgilio de los Reyes.

The DAR held the series of trainings in compliance with

RA 9285 or the country's law providing for ADR.

Apart from handling DAR cases, the ADR mediators can also resolve other disputes particularly on land issues.

Only 37 out of the 59 participants in region 7 were able to complete the trainings done in four phases. The last phase involved included an internship wherein participants were made to handle actual mediation cases in the various towns and cities in Central Visayas.

DAR will continue to hold ADR trainings in other regions throughout the country to be able to provide speedy resolution to DAR-related case and land disputes through professional, skilled and objective ADR mediators, this is said. (PIA-Cebu

with PR from DAR)

Application now open for SU's 51st Nat'l writers workshop

By RACHELLE M. NESSIA

DUMAGUETE CITY, Jan. 2 (PIA) -- Silliman University (SU) in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental is now accepting applications for its 51st National Writers Workshop, which will run from April 30 to May 18, 2012 at the SU Rose Lamb Sobrepeña Writers Village, this city.

The workshop is offering 15 fellowships to promising writers. Fellows will be provided housing, a modest stipend, and a subsidy to partially defray their transportation costs, a release from SU said.

Applicants must submit manuscripts in English on or before February 10, 2012.

Manuscripts should be submitted in hard copy on short-size bond paper, using Times New Roman or Calibri in 12 pt. font type.

Applicants for Fiction and Creative Non-Fiction fellowships should submit three to five entries while applicants for Poetry fellowships should submit seven to ten poems.

Applicants for Drama fellowship should submit at least a One-Act Play. For plays exceeding the one act length, a scene accompanied by a synopsis of the entire work should be included.

Each fiction, non-fiction, or drama manuscript should not be more than 50 pages in double-spaced format.

"We encourage applicants to stay below the 50 pages since a submission half that length is more than sufficient as a critical gauge," the press release said.

Manuscripts should be submitted along with a letter of recommendation from a literature professor or an established writer, resume, a notarized certification that the works are original, and two 2x2 ID pictures.

Entries that fail to comply with said requirements will automatically be disqualified. Applications must be sent to Dr. Evelyn F. Mascuñana, Chair, Department of English and Literature, Silliman University, 6200 Dumaguete City.

For inquiries, email atnwworkshop_su@yahoo.com or call (035) 422-6002 loc. 350. (RMN/PIA Negros Oriental with reports from Ian Rosales Casocot)



Mourners of the two dead children who were swept away by Typhoon Sendong's floods in Brgy. Apolong, Valencia town, Negros Oriental province, make their way to the town church and lay to rest the bodies of Bengeline Cadalin, 14, and her brother, Rey, 12, on Dec. 21, 2011, four days after Sendong dumped a month's worth of rains in the province. As the Okoy River swelled in the morning of Dec. 17, Bengeline and Rey were left behind in their house as their parents brought four of their younger brothers and sisters to safety. When their father came back for them, the water already washed away their home and the two siblings. Their bodies were found the following day. (Photo by Rachele Nessia/PIA)

'Hugyaw' concert-for-a-cause set for Sendong victims in Dumaguete

By JENNIFER CATAN-TILOS

DUMAGUETE CITY, Jan. 4 (PIA) -- Top musicians and artists in Negros Oriental have come together for a fund-raising concert for the victims of typhoon Sendong. The concert-for-a-cause will be held on January 6 at 7:00 p.m. at the Macias Sports Center, Capitol Area, Dumaguete City.

The event is dubbed "Hugyaw! sa Panaghiusa-Kalipay-Paglaum" and features the best talents in the province, said Glynda Descuatan, one of the concert organizers.

Proceeds of the concert will be used for the tents, construction materials and other necessary supplies for those houses which were totally or partially damaged of the typhoon. Entrance fee is P50.

"This is for a more lasting solution to the problem of dislocation. While relief efforts are ongoing, there is the greater challenge of re-building these communities. Some of the families now cramped inside chapels or day-care centers, or stay with relatives who can barely support their own families," said Descuatan. "Some have set up camp in vacant lots."

To make the program unique and more meaningful, Descuatan explained, it is segregated in three parts. One part called "Panaghiusa" involves audience participation, community singing and getting-together activities. There will also be live band accompaniment from the Youth Band Z'MAR, of Sibulan United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Kalipay segment will also feature dance groups, winners of local, regional and national contests and the choir groups of corporations. There will also be a fashion show.

The third part is Paglaum which will feature testimonies of hope from affected families, plus videos and photos taken by various groups to be played on the wide screens, among others.

The organizers request the public to support the concert-for-a-cause to help the typhoon Sendong victims in Dumaguete City. (PIA/JCT)

LET US KNOW!

We welcome questions, clarifications and feedback:
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Greening program to benefit agri sector

BY HAZEL GLORIA

CEBU CITY, January 4 (PIA) -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-7) says the government's national greening program

will considerably benefit the agriculture sector especially in improving water yield of watersheds.

"It would ensure supply of water to irrigate farmlands," DENR-7 regional

executive director Maximo Dichoso said.

He also urged business sectors, academe, non-government organizations and other stakeholders to support the implementation of the National Greening Program (NGP) Central Visayas.

This developed as DENR-7 is set to cover 10,628 hectares this year or an increase of 188.71 percent of its 2011 target of 5,632 hectares covering the four provinces of Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental and Siquijor.

Dichoso added that under the NGP, the government seeks to improve the vegetative cover of watersheds that could supply the much needed freshwater requirement of the region.

"There is a need to work together for a collaborative greening and maintenance, at the same time promoting the strength of social mobilization and volunteerism through public-private partnership among the various stakeholders to make sure that we can hit the goal of planting 3.523 million seedlings this year," he said.

By soliciting the help and support of our business sectors, we can ensure that those planted areas will be taken care of and that proper maintenance activities will be provided for with the resources available from them, Dichoso noted.

President Aquino issued EO-26 on February 24, 2011 declaring the National Greening Program as a government priority initiative to reduce poverty, promote food security, environmental stability and biodiversity conservation, and enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Specifically, it seeks to plant 1.5 billion seedlings in 1.5 million hectares of public lands nationwide in six years, from 2011 to 2016. This is more than twice the government's accomplishment for the past 25 years, of about 730,000 hectares.

Dichoso explained that NGP addresses soil erosion, secures a sustainable supply of water and provides additional livelihood for farmers through agroforestry.

Food security is one of the pressing issues facing the Philippines today and widely regarded as highly susceptible to the effects of climate change. Soil erosion is equally problematic due to the country's geographic conditions, the DENR said.

DENR data showed that about 20 million hectares or two-thirds of the country's total land area of 30 million hectares, are hilly and mountainous, making these areas susceptible to soil erosion.

Soil erosion, according to studies, directly impact on low crop productivity, reduction of the capacity of water conveyance structures, destruction of wildlife habitat, and destruction of standing crops. (mbcn/hfg/PIA-7 & DENR-7)



President Benigno S. Aquino III (far left) moderating his own impromptu press conference held at the lobby of the Dumaguete Airport's arrival area in Sibulan, Negros Oriental. The President dropped by on Dec. 21, 2011 where he met with the mayors of the ten areas affected by Typhoon Sendong in Negros Oriental. He pledged to provided funds for the immediate repair of major roads and bridges that were damaged by the storm. (RMN/PIA NEGOR)

PAGASA warns residents in creeks, rivers to be cautious for heavy rains

BY FAYETTE C. RINEN

CEBU CITY, January 4 (PIA) -- This early, PAGASA-Mactan has already advised residents living near creeks and rivers in Cebu to be extra cautious as the first three months of this year will experience rainfall due to the La Niña phenomenon.

PAGASA-Mactan Chief Oscar Tabada in a media interview said they already gave evacuation warnings to all stakeholders as Cebu and the rest of the country will witness continuous rains from January to March, this year.

Tabada especially warned that the La Niña will bring heavy rains in the Visayas in February and March as he advised those living in danger zones such as creeks, rivers and in landslide and flood-prone areas to be extra vigilant and immediately evacuate their homes.

The PAGASA is expecting five typhoons to enter the country for the first five months this year or from the period January to May.

Eight automatic weather stations (AWS), a gadget that measures the volume of rainfall, have already been placed in Metro Cebu, Bogu City, Bantayan Island and Camotes Island in the northern part of Cebu as well

as the provinces of Bohol and Negros Oriental, this is said.

Another AWS is proposed to be stationed at Alegria, a municipality in southern Cebu.

Tabada said 7.5 milliliters of rainfall volume can already trigger landslides and flooding in danger zone areas.

Tabada previously said that since the installation of a weather radar system in Mactan that covers a 500-kilometer range, daily weather bulletins have been issued as part of their early warning signal to community residents living in critical areas at risk of landslides, flashfloods and flooding.

There is a need to heighten disaster consciousness and preparedness in the minds of every Filipino because it is not the responsibility of the government alone but a lookout of every sector in society, Tabada stressed.

PAGASA on the other hand, said the low pressure area located at the East Southeast of General Santos has disorganized and is expected not to intensify into a typhoon, this is said.

Today's forecast in Cebu is cloudy with sunny periods and light rains becoming moderate until the weekend, according to PAGASA-Mactan. (PIA-Cebu)

Bohol deploys prosperity teams to sustain peace

BY REY ANTHONY CHIU

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol, January 2 (PIA) -- To sustain peace and development at the countryside in Bohol, the province formed a new breed of rural development specialists called 'Bohol Prosperity Teams' (BPT).

802nd Brigade Commander Colonel John Bonafos shared this in the recent Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) meeting at the Mansion.

Bonafos said the 15 prosperity teams were recently deployed to 15 barangays of 12 towns in Bohol as pilot areas for the BPT to zero in and come up with development initiatives at the purok level.

According to Bohol governor Edgar Chatto, the Bohol Prosperity Team is an integration of skilled experts from the 2nd Special Forces' Special Operation Team and the former Bohol Poverty Reduction Management Office's Community Organizers for Community

Development (COCD).

The joint team aims to promote Purok Power Movement for Peace and Development.

The teams are now in Doljo Panglao, Totolan Daus, Matabao Tubigon in the first district of Bohol.

These teams have passed four stages of trainings, and were just recently deployed to target barangays, Bonafos added.

Another team is in barangays Santo Nino Talibon, Calanggaman and Pangpang Ubay, Nueva Estrella and Nueva Esperanza Bien Unido, Concepcion Danao and Cagawasan Dagohoy all in the second district.

The BPT is also in barangays Paraiso Mabini, Katipunan Alicia, Panadtaran Candijay and in Montesuerte and Villarcayo in Carmen.

The team integrates all the interventions by both SF and Bohol Capitol in areas formerly affected or threatened by insurgency.

Efforts include community organizing for livelihood projects and technical assistance; skills development which tools communities on basic skills to get them off poverty.

Called special operations teams, these experts have largely been credited as filling the void after Bohol was declared insurgency free.

Now the front liners in the government's service reaching the barangays, these prosperity teams that were deployed in threatened barangays will spread into puroks more focused development interventions.

The BPT is Bohol's response to the reported re-entry of communist rebels who were formerly chased out of the province during multi-faceted anti-insurgency interventions in the past.

Bonafos reported that this early, the BPT has conducted gatherings and dialogs. (mbcn/rahc/PIA-Bohol)

PPOC Bohol mulls funding aid for gov't witnesses

BY REY ANTHONY CHIU

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol Jan. 2 (PIA) -- The Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) in Bohol looks into inserting an assistance system into its law enforcement program to encourage more witnesses to boldly come out and testify to speed up convictions of cases in courts.

Bohol governor and PPOC chair Edgar Chatto earlier tasked Romeo Teruel, head of the Bohol Center for Development Studies to submit a proposal for an operational program to help government witnesses with the expenses attendant to attending court hearings or trials.

The decision came up after an out-of-town council meeting in Guinduman. Councilor Ephraim Licayan said one of the factors for early acquittals and low conviction rates in the courts is the lack of witnesses to support and build solid cases.

The councilor said he has once volunteered as a witness but the hassles he has to go through such as spending for his transportation, meals and time spent are too much for ordinary well meaning citizens.

Police investigators also aired similar concerns.

"We want to help them if only to assure conviction and keep criminals off the streets, but we too have our own constraints," a police station investigation officer said.

SIQUIJOR

Siquijor OFWs seek assistance to avail of OWWA loan

BY RIZALIE A. CALIBO

SIQUIJOR, January 2 (PIA) -- At least three Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) from Siquijor sought technical assistance from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to avail of the loan packages from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

Roger Maglinte, 50; Bernard Duhaylungod, 54, and Felix Pabinguit, 44, all seamen overseas returnees appeared last week at the local office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to request for assistance in meeting up the requirements for the loan grant.

Maglinte, Duhaylungsod and Pabinguit had been working overseas for 20, 10 and 5 years, respectively but because of age, shipping agencies hardly accept them anymore to another contract, they said.

In an interview with the PIA, they said two of them have attended the Enterprise Development Training (EDT) for would-be OFW entrepreneurs under the OFW Reintegration Program in Manila while they were applying for another contract.

Hearing upon the program, they said, they tried attending the seminar and found it very helpful especially to returnees like them.

Maglinte said that if he will be given the chance, he wants to venture into "kandingan" or goat raising while Duhaylungsod and Pabinguit both want to establish cottages and start a tourism-related business.

They said they need DTI's assistance to come up with acceptable business plans and get entrepreneurship trainings as one of the requisites to avail of the OWWA loan.

"We are very thankful that the DTI readily gave their assistance," the applicants said, referring to the orientation on Entrepreneurship that the DTI here initially gave last week. The three scheduled for another sessions with each assigned personnel to focus on each project.

EDT is an integral component of all livelihood programs initiated by the OWWA to prepare the OFW who wish to venture into entrepreneurship or strengthen their already established business, it was learned.

The assistance ranges from P300,000 to P2 million depending on the nature and capital needed of their proposed business/projects, it was also learned. (PIA-Siquijor/RACalibo)