

End to open-pit ban triggers showdown over Tampakan

THE RETURN of open-pit mining is expected to cause “grave environmental destruction,” a think tank said, though analysts believe it will result in more investment that will boost the economy.

The Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED) said in a statement that resuming open-pit mining projects will ruin forest cover in mining areas, damage natural watersheds, and expose residents to pollution.

“It will cost the local government greatly in the long run when it comes to addressing the health and livelihood impacts the projects will bring to their constituents,” it added.

On Monday, the South Cotabato provincial government reversed its 12-year-old ban on open-pit mining, paving the way for the continuation of the contested Tampakan copper-gold project.

Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) is the developer of Tampakan, being in possession of a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement.

According to SMI, the mine is one of the “largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world.”

In 2021, the government lifted the four-year ban on open-pit mining as well as the nine-year moratorium on granting mining permits.

“Tampakan has been the subject of opposition from locals and other concerned groups for over a decade for good reason. It makes no sense that the (provincial council) now brings all that to nought



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at a time when climate change impacts are also intensifying. Open-pit mining and large-scale extractive industries in general exacerbate climate vulnerabilities of host communities, and we have long seen proof that Mindanao is not exempt from catastrophic disasters,” CEED added.

Environmental group Alyansa Tigil Mina said the South Cotabato process for lifting the ban was flawed.

“The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members railroaded the process of amending the Environmental Code of the province as they hastily approved in regular session a motion to adopt proposed amendments, without any discussion or vote,” the group said in a statement.

“It is worth noting that the proposed amendments carried changes that were not originally part of the proposal presented to the public. These additional amendments were also fast-tracked (with) no benefit of any discussion whatsoever,” it added.

Advocates of Science and Technology for the People (AGHAM), a nongovernmental organization, added that the amendment of the environmental code was hasty and timed to coincide with the national elections.

“The lifting... took place immediately after the national and local elections. It was contrived such a manner obviously to prevent public reproach, outrage and condemnation,” the group said.

AGHAM said that if the Tampakan project goes head, thousands of residents could be displaced, five major rivers or tributaries face contamination, and at least 33,000 hectares planted to rice in the Koronadal Valley will be affected.

An economist said that the return of open-pit mining in the region will attract more investment and generate more jobs and other business opportunities for the area.

“For as long as global best practices are observed in the mining activities, as well as effectively

managing the impact on the environment, to make economic gains sustainable over the long-term and for the coming generations,” RCBC Head Economist Michael L. Ricafort said in a text message.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) also expressed its support for the recent decision, noting that open-pit mining could be performed safely and sustainably.

“Open-pit mines can be operated safely, according to globally accepted standards, and can be rehabilitated properly in a manner that provides alternative and productive land use after the life of mine,” COMP said in an e-mail.

The chamber said that the reopening of the Tampakan mine would achieve a “vibrant, multi-faceted local and regional economy that provides sustainable employment, business opportunities, and access to education, health, and other social development programs that will improve and enhance the quality of life of those living in these projects’ host communities, including their children.”

“The Tampakan project will be an essential post-pandemic economic recovery tool whose actual and potential benefits far outweigh the potential negative impacts. We believe no other sector is likely to provide a more responsible and sustainable alternative,” it added. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsos**

Indonesian augmented reality developer plans \$20-M PHL investment

INDONESIA'S PT WIR Asia Tbk plans to invest an initial \$20 million in the Philippines for 2022, bringing in its augmented reality (AR) technology, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said.

In a statement on Tuesday, the DTI said the Philippine Trade and Investment Center in Jakarta met with PT WIR officials in April to discuss its entry into the Philippines.

WIR, a listed company, develops AR technology integrated with virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI).

“PT WIR Asia Tbk is considered the first Metaverse company in Indonesia and has opened offices in the Philippines through the acquisition and investment in domestic Philippine companies,” the DTI said.

“The Indonesian tech company currently has five global patents for AR which are registered nationally as well as in the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) which covers 153

countries. WIR Group has completed more than a thousand projects, encompassing AR and VR application development and branding projects, for corporations from various industrial sectors located in more than 20 countries,” it added.

According to Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez, AI technology is expected to revolutionize everyday life within the next decade.

He added that the Philippines has been enhancing its own AI capacity, which holds the potential to lower cost, boost efficiency, increase revenue, and improve the customer experience.

“We expect the talent of the Filipino to lead in terms of building, developing, and utilizing new technologies like AI, robotics, the cloud, and 5G connectivity, among others, and use these technologies for economic expansion, social change, and nation-building,” Mr. Lopez said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Jan.-Feb. births and deaths fall sharply

THE NUMBER of registered births and deaths in the two months to February declined by 63.2% and 60.4% year on year, respectively, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported.

Citing preliminary data from its Vital Statistics Report, the PSA said births in the first two months of 2022 totaled 68,087, with the National Capital Region (NCR) accounting for 10,727, or 15.8% of all births nationwide.

Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) was close behind with 10,023, down 62.9% from a year earlier. Registered deaths amounted to 43,805 nationwide, down 60.4% from a year earlier. Metro Manila accounted for 8,385 or 19.1% of all deaths in the Philippines.

Registered marriages, on the other hand, totaled 21,495, down 64% from a year earlier. Metro Manila registered the most marriages with 3,094 or 14.4% of the national total.

In a separate statement, the PSA said ischaemic heart diseases, cerebrovascular disease, and neoplasms — a category that includes cancer — were the top three causes of deaths.

Ischaemic heart diseases accounted for 20.8% of the total deaths in the country while cerebrovascular diseases accounted for 9.9% and neoplasms 8.9%.

Deaths associated with COVID-19 totaled 3,007 in the first two months,

of which the dead who had been identified as infected with the virus accounted for 2,377 cases. COVID-19 was the sixth-leading cause of death during the period.

The NCR had the highest number of deaths due to COVID-19 with 1,339 or 44.5% of the total. This was followed by Calabarzon with 512, and Central Luzon 459.

Quezon City had the largest number of deaths due to COVID-19 with 301, accounting for 22.5% of the total. This was followed by the City of Manila with 218 or 16.3% and the City of Caloocan with 143 or 10.7%.

According to the PSA, COVID-19 death data were based on the descriptions written on the medical certificate of the deceased and certified by health officers of the local government units where the death took place.

These COVID-19 tallies differ from the disease surveillance numbers produced by the Department of Health.

Data on the Vital Statistics report was compiled from tallies generated by city or municipal Civil Registrars, consolidated by the PSA's Provincial Statistical Offices and then submitted to the Office of the Civil Registrar General as of March 31, 2022.

The PSA also noted that the figures are results of actual registration without any adjustment for under registration. — **Abigail Marie Pelea Yraola**

JOB OPENING

2 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS
2 BUSINESS CONSULTANTS
2 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

- University/College Graduate
- At least 1yr of professional relevant work experience
- Able to speak Korean and English (or Filipino) fluently
- Able to read and write Korean and English with clarity

KOREA SME BUSINESS CENTER CORP.
Unit 1807 One San Miguel Bldg., San Miguel Avenue, corner Shaw Blvd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No.: **(02) 7989-1443**; Email: **ksbc.phil@gmail.com**
Look for: **Steve Lim**

JOB OPENING

LA SIESTA BEACH RESORT INC.
U-25D 2/F, Zeta II Bldg., Salcedo St., Makati City
Tel No.: 7506-1848

1 GENERAL MANAGER
1 MANAGER

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's/College Degree in any field
- Excellent knowledge of management with Strong leadership qualities
- At least 2yrs. experience as General Manager

Kindly send your resume or CV to this email:
Lasiestaph@gmail.com

JOB OPENING

Company Name and Address
Schneider Electric Logistics Asia Pte. Ltd. / APC Admin Bldg., Lot 1 Block 5 Phase 2, PEZA Rosario, Cavite
Contact details of the company micaela.tan@se.com
Available Job Vacancy/Position Spanish Technical Support Representative

Job Description
The Spanish Technical Support Representative is responsible for the following:
• Receive and manage customer queries via media required by country / region of support
• Answer incoming “Sales Related” calls and proactively qualify sales opportunities
• Document all incoming calls using CRM tool
• Promote Schneider's existing and new products and solutions with a unique value proposition, cross selling and up selling with innovative, alternative solutions to replace the competitor's product
• Participate in various Technical & Customer Service & Sales Training Courses as required
• Support the sales teams with generating and assembling larger, more complex Quotations and order follow up
• Escalate problems to Technical Support Level 2 when standard troubleshooting techniques and databases cannot provide an adequate solution
• Perform Technical Assistance with all internal and external customers for all of Schneider's products
• Conduct initial troubleshooting and support of Products by Schneider
• Dispatch a Field Service Engineer or its Service Partner for unscheduled on-site services

Basic Qualification

- Candidate must possess a bachelor's degree preferably in Engineering (Electrical, Electronics) or equivalent experience. - Experience in technical support role advantage
- Must be fluent in both English and Spanish
- Must possess excellent skills in listening, expression and interrelationships
- Must be keen to details and be technically smart
- Must be capable in working independently and utilize sound judgement
- Ability to adjust quickly to reforming situations and express determination to achieve incessant improvement and excellent customer service
- Demonstrate ability to understand and explain technical information
- Ability to solve customer problems via telephone, chat, web and email
- Willing to work in Cavite on a rotating schedule

Salary Range PHP 90,000 – 100,000 Monthly

HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS., INC.
53rd Floor PBCOM TOWER AYALA AVE. COR. V.A. RUFINO ST., SALCEDO VILLAGE, MAKATI CITY
Email: **ph_recruitment@huawei.com**
SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

HUMAN RESOURCE BUSINESS PARTNER (HRBP) FOR DELIVERY AND SERVICE BUSINESS GROUP

Job Description

- Evaluate employee's performance and generate improvement plans for the development and growth of the Delivery and Service Business Group
- Provide assistance to employees to continue to achieve their professional and personal development
- Conduct training for employees and guidance to develop skills and abilities such as Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time (SMART)
- Specific goals while understanding business strategy plans and business goals
- Organize weekly meetings for business leaders to review people management issues, develop solutions, execute solutions and review progress report
- Review organizational structure that clarifies resource allocation is reasonable and no resources are underutilized such as ensuring deployed employees are assigned to handle projects with a definite revenue

Qualifications

- With at least 2 years work experience as an HRBP for delivery and service business group
- Specializes in Human Resources Management with relevant skills
- With a Bachelor's Degree specializing in Process Equipment and Control Engineering
- Has strong background in Talent Management
- With extensive experience in business teamwork and communication, Human Resource organization and People management
- Has extensive experience in coaching, counselling, performance management, and human resource skills
- Highly proficient in Chinese and English languages

Unilab unit expands Sta. Rosa facility with new production line

A UNIT of Unilab, Inc. expanded its manufacturing operation in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, the Board of Investments (BoI) said in a statement on Tuesday.

The BoI said Amherst Parenterals, Inc., inaugurated a new sterile liquid production line, which involved investment of P291.21 million, on April 29.

“Amherst's newly-constructed production line will be utilized in the manufacturing of sterile liquid solutions for nebulization (respiratory therapeutic products) as part of the company's commitment to provide Filipinos with ready access to quality and affordable healthcare products,” the BoI said.

According to the BoI, Amherst was registered on Sept. 23 and makes respiratory therapy nebulate products such as Salbutamol and Salbutamol + Ipratropium.

BoI Executive Director Bobby G. Fondevilla said: “The government is very much apprecia-

tive of the company's efforts and commitment to provide our countrymen with ready access to quality and affordable healthcare... this business decision is very significant as the country continues to recover from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.”

Recent healthcare industry approvals from the BoI include a P24-million project of Lloyd Laboratories, Inc., which is seeking to become a local producer of COVID-19 oral drug Molnupiravir; and the \$1.9-billion project of Medtecs International Corp. Ltd. to establish an industrial complex focused on producing personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as electric vehicles (EVs) and textiles.

The BoI said the Lloyd Laboratories project will have an annual production capacity of one million 400-milligram (mg) capsules of Molnupiravir while the Medtecs project will generate 125,000 jobs over seven years. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Pilmico meat unit targets distribution to over 300 supermarkets this year

PILMICO FOOD Corp.-controlled meat retailer The Good Meat said it has set a target to distribute its product to over 300 supermarkets as well as additional bricks-and-mortar stores by the end of 2022.

“This is in line with the goal of Pilmico, the Aboitiz Group's food and agribusiness unit, to become closer to their consumers,” the company said in a statement on Tuesday.

The Good Meat currently supplies fresh cuts, marinated pork, and ready-to-cook products to over 250 supermarkets, including Puregold, Robinsons Supermarket, Marketplace by Rustan's, Merry Mart, Shopwise, and Divimart in Greater Luzon.

“The Good Meat aspires to be the leading pork supplier in the Philippines,”

Pilmico Vice-President of Farm Sales and Meat Operations Hendel P. Cabral said.

“We make sure to follow only the highest food safety standards in our technologically advanced facilities so that more Filipinos can enjoy quality meats.”

In March, Pilmico said that The Good Meat tapped Landmark supermarket to distribute ready-to-cook products, while a new physical store was opened in Libis, Quezon City.

The company processes its meats at Tarlac Meatmasters.

“The facility implements heightened food safety protocols and biosecurity measures that ensures The Good Meat provides safe and premium quality meats,” Pilmico said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Fuel marking revenue hits P459.58 billion

TAXES generated from fuel marking amounted to P459.58 billion since the program started in September 2019, the Department of Finance said.

The total includes P429.77 billion collected from customs duties as of May 12. Some P29.81 billion worth of excise taxes had been collected as of Oct. 28, 2021.

The volume of marked fuel was 41.33 billion liters as of May 13, according to data provided by Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III via Viber on Monday.

Luzon accounted for over 73% of all marked fuel, or over 30 billion liters, while 8.6 and 2.2 billion liters were marked in Mindanao and the Visayas, respectively.

Diesel accounted for 60.70% of all marked fuel, while gasoline consisted of 38.8%, and kerosene 0.51%.

Mr. Dominguez said in his message that he believes the next administration should continue the fuel marking program.

He added that it is essential the program be included in the next administration's

fiscal consolidation plan, considering the revenue it brings in and its effectiveness at curbing oil smuggling.

The fuel marking program was launched on Sept. 4, 2019. Fuel is marked with a special dye to signify tax compliance, while the absence of the dye is considered an indication that the fuel may be smuggled.

The program is authorized by Republic Act 10963, or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law.

Last year, P158.44 billion was collected via duties. In 2022 so far, collections amounted to P144.77 billion.

Some 28 oil companies are participating in the fuel marking program.

The Bureau of Customs has marked a total of 12.19 billion liters of fuel this year, as of May 13. Last year, it marked 17 billion liters.

Mr. Dominguez said that the government expects to collect P147.1 billion worth of fuel excise tax and value-added tax in 2022. — **Tobias Jared Tomas**

CTA rules against BIR in withholding tax dispute

THE Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) has partially granted an appeal by Tullet Prebon Philippines, Inc. (TPPI), a financial services company, to review an assessment of the company's 2016 unutilized and excess credit withholding tax amounting to P11.3 million.

In a 24-page decision on May 11, the CTA Third Division ordered the Commissioner of Internal Revenue to issue a tax credit certificate to the petitioner, reducing its tax liabilities to P7.5 million.

“TPPI's administrative claim was filed on June 26, 2018, while the judicial claim via the instant petitioner for review was filed on April 11, 2019, it is clear that both the administrative judicial claims were timely filed,” the court said in the ruling written by CTA Associate Justice Erlinda P. Uy.

TPPI is based in Taguig City and brokers foreign exchange transactions,

deposits, and other income security agreements.

The tax court noted that since the company was able to prove that it filed its administrative claim within the prescribed period, the Court had jurisdiction to handle the dispute.

“Timeliness of the filing of the claim is mandatory and jurisdictional and the court cannot take cognizance of a judicial claim for a refund either prematurely

or out of time,” it said. “As long as the administrative claim and the judicial claim were filed within the two-year prescriptive period, then there was the exhaustion of the administrative remedies.”

The CTA noted that the certificate of creditable taxes withheld presented by the TPPI was deemed competent and conclusive evidence of payment and remittance to the revenue bureau. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**