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President Duterte is giving mining firms six months to plant new trees on affected lands or have their permits revoked.



President Rodrigo Duterte
(MANILA BULLETIN)

“Itong mining, I am going to give you six months from now. Six months. I do not want to see any bald... I want trees as tall as me by six months. Pag wala yung kahoy na iniwan niyo, na winasak niyo yung lupa (If there are no new trees in the land you destroyed), then consider your permit revoked,” Duterte told reporters in Davao City.

“Hindi ako nagbibiro (I am not joking). Do not wait for the day of your sorrow. Six months. I do not want to see any bald piece of land there. Pag wala akong nakitang kahoy na kasing taas ko (If I don’t see trees as tall as me), better pack up your things. You can go. And that will be closed permanently,” he added.

“Maybe next year, maybe, I will ban open-pit mining. Sleep on it. Sleep on it,” he continued.

February this year, Duterte revealed he instructed the military to bomb open-pit mines that would defy a government ban on such mineral extraction process even if it would result in lower government revenues.

“If some open pit mining will still be operating, I’ve instructed the Air Force to bomb it,” Duterte said in Bisaya.

The President revealed that he already expressed to the Cabinet his position against open-pit mining, saying he would no longer allow the environmental situation to worsen due to this destructive form of mining.

Under the law, open-pit mining in the country is allowed but former Environment Secretary Gina Lopez banned all prospective open pit mines during her brief stay in office.

The President later agreed with banning open-pit mining due to the damage caused on the environment. He has rejected a recommendation from the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) to lift the ban.

Duterte had also met with representatives from mining firms in Malacañang after threatening to close down the entire mining industry, August last year.

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