

HEADLINES

Resort removes structure on rock formation amid DENR crackdown

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BEACH VIEW Illegal structures have been removed along Patar beachfront in Bolinao, Pangasinan, giving visitors a clear view of the sea. —WILLIE LOMIBAO

BOLINAO, PANGASINAN — The management of a beach resort here voluntarily dismantled a concrete gazebo that it illegally built on top of a rock formation following a warning it received from local environment officials.

Angelo Reyes, pollution control officer of Treasures of Bolinao Beach Resort at Barangay Patar here, said they had taken down the structure to comply with the notice of violation issued to them last year.

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Ilocos region said the resort's gazebo and "floating" bridge on top of a rock formation were illegal structures.

Notices of violation

The beach resort was one of the 811 establishments, including government buildings, that were issued with similar notices in May last year for building structures inside foreshore areas and no-build (salvage) zones in this town.

Patar, a coastal village facing the West Philippine Sea, boasts of a long stretch of white sand and coral line beaches, which, some tourists say, are better than those found at Boracay in Aklan province.

Resort workers took down the gazebo hours before Carlito Tuballa, DENR regional director, and his team arrived to start the dismantling.

DENR records showed that some 2,090 notices of violations were served in different areas in the Ilocos region, with 491 issued in San Fabian town, 677 in Alaminos City, and in San Juan town in La Union and Pagudpud town in Ilocos Norte.

Deferred

But the demolition of the floating bridge was deferred after the resort owner submitted to the DENR a pleading justifying its construction.

“When the bridge was built 20 years ago, there were no regulations yet about building structures on coral rocks,” Reyes said.

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The beach resort was one of those that pioneered tourism in this town and the bridge was once the “landmark of Bolinao tourism,” he said.

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