

DENR cancels ECCs of 4 mining, 2 ‘environmentally destructive’ projects

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THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has canceled the expired environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued for six development projects, including four for mining, as part of the agency’s continuing industry-wide ECC audit.

Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said the cancellation of the ECCs was meant to prevent environmental degradation and suffering of people in would-be affected communities.

The canceled ECCs for mining are the Mindoro nickel project of Intex Resources Philippines Inc. for the extraction of nickel laterite ore covering 11,216 hectares in the municipality of Victoria, Pola and Socorro in Oriental Mindoro and municipality of Sablayan in Occidental Mindoro; Cebu coal mining project of Forumn Cebu Coal Corp. (FCCC) in Cebu province; iron copper and other mining project of CEKAS Development Corp. at a 810-hectare land in Donsolihon, Cagayan de Oro City, in the province of Misamis Oriental; gold mining and processing project of Eaglerock Mining Corp. in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur.

Also canceled were ECCs for Integrated Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) of Mejore Wood Works Inc. in Janipaan, San Agustin, Surigao del Sur; and the Parañaque-Las Piñas Coastal Bay Project Land Reclamation of Alltech Contractors Inc. for the reclamation of 203.34 hectares in Parañaque and 421.71 hectares in Las Piñas along the coasts of the two Metro Manila cities.

All the ECCs, Lopez said, have expired, and the DENR has no intention of granting the companies the ECCs, considering their potential impacts to the environment.

A known antimining advocate, Lopez said the campaign against illegal, irresponsible and destructive mining projects will continue under her watch, as she vowed to announce the result of the ongoing mining audit by the end of the month.

“On January 31 we will announce the result of the mining audit, and the following week, we will announce whether those already issued with suspension order will remain suspended or not,” she said. “As I’ve said, the DENR has adopted social justice as its heart and soul. All projects that will cause people to suffer will have to stop.”

Lopez said she strongly opposed land-reclamation projects because of their adverse impact to coastal environment.

The DENR had declared protected areas and watersheds as “off limits” to destructive development projects as part of the agency’s mandate to protect the environment and conserve the country’s rich biodiversity.

The DENR is currently reviewing a total of 800 ECCs for various development projects and had so far canceled six ECCs for mining projects, including a housing project within the La Mesa watershed.

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