

Duterte tells Cimatu: Do your job the right way

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Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu came by helicopter to Brooke's Point in Palawan to investigate claims that Ipilan Nickel Corporation (INC) had illegally clear cut thousands of old-growth trees. He met with local leaders for a dialogue during his first field work in his capacity as DENR chief. PHOTO BY REDEMPTO ANDA

“Do your duty and do it right.”

These were the marching orders of President Rodrigo Duterte to environment secretary Roy Cimatu, who replaced former secretary Regina “Gina” Lopez.

“My marching orders really (were) you are there in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), just do your duty and do it right. Always do it for the country,” Duterte said during the pilot episode of his TV show “Mula sa Masa, Para sa Masa,” which aired on Friday night.

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The President expressed confidence that Cimatu would be able to perform his job well.

“I chose Cimatu because I believe in him,” he said, citing that he has worked with him when he was still mayor of Davao City.

“And we became friends and I know Cimatu. He is honest, hardworking, he is a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy. He served his country well,” he added.

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“(He’s) a silent guy, very low-key person but does his work very well,” Duterte said as he recalled telling Cimatu to enforce the law especially on mining.

“Yung mining naman is, there is what you would call a description of your work. All you have to do is to read the law creating that bureau,” he said.

“Basahin lang niya ‘yung mga provisions diyan (He just has to read the provisions) and enforce (them). It doesn’t have to be a genius especially Cimatu graduate nga ng PMA ‘yan, he will know what to do and he will do it right,” he added.

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The situation at the DENR became controversial after Lopez ordered the closing of mining firms and the cancellation of mining contracts.

Duterte said Lopez was rejected despite his “public pleadings” but said he respects the decision of the Commission on Appointments (CA).

“Una na natin pag usapan ‘yung kay (Let’s talk about the situation of) Secretary Lopez in the sense as she was rejected by the Commission on Appointments despite of my public pleadings in one or two public gatherings but I do not want to impose anything against the, or impose on the congressional body, Commission on Appointments,” he said.

Cimatu has yet to be confirmed by the CA. *IDL*

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