

Diwalwal gold processing facilities ordered moved to designated site

DAVAO CITY, Philippines — The Philippine Mining Development Corporation (PMDC) has issued an execution order of its earlier cease-and-desist order (CDO), this time to finally order all gold processing activities away from the mining area of Diwalwal.

The ball mills, using mercury to separate the gold from the ore, and the carbon in-pulp (CIP), using cyanide, would be moved anytime to Barangay Mabatas, some six kilometers down the slope of Mt. Diwata Range and the 729-hectare Diwalwal mining area.

Atty. Alberto Sipaco, former Commission on Human Rights regional head here, and currently the designated president of the Philippine Mining Development Corp., said 210 of the 233 ball mills and CIPs have heeded the final warning and the announced that the 23 others which failed to meet the deadline on Monday to register, would be demolished.

Earlier on June 29 last year, the PMDC issued the CDO against the continued operation of the ball mills and CIPs but its implementation to shut them off was suspended several times after small-scale miners opposed the order. The PMDC said there were 233 ball mills operating in the 729 hectares of Mt. Diwata. Of this number, Sipaco said only 233 were registered with the barangay while the remaining 100 ball mills were inactive.

Sipaco said the CDO ordered all processing plants to transfer to the 60-hectare Mabatas processing site, whose tailings pond has an estimated capacity of 79 million tons.

“In Mabatas, we have already installed water sources and even constructed road for accessibility,” said Atty. Sipaco

The water supply tanks and distribution lines were completed on April 6 this year while the road construction and rehabilitation was a contribution of the provincial government of Compostela Valley and the municipal government of Monkayo for the relocation site.

The PMDC has announced that they are planning to convert a portion of Mt. Diwalwal Reservation Area into a mineral processing industry zone and to open it for

investors. Sipaco said that an Australian mining firm was interested to put up investment in the planned mineral processing industry zone.

The PMDC chief said Diwalwal was the ” gold find of the century” with gold content of the ores estimated at 62 grams per ton of ores. Current estimate of the gold deposit in Diwalwal placed the value at four to five trillion dollars.

Diwalwal is part of the 8,100-hectare mineral reservation area declared by then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo under the Presidential Decree 217.

Source:

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