

advance copy



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**  
Community Environment and Natural Resources Office  
Brgy. Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan  
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14 July 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

**FOR :** The Regional Executive Director  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
MIMAROPA Region

**ATTN :** The Regional Director  
Mines and Geoscience Bureau  
MIMAROPA Region

**THRU :** The PENR Officer  
Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office  
Province of Palawan

**FROM :** OIC, CENRO  
Community Environment and Natural Resources Office  
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

**SUBJECT :** ON-THE-SPOT REPORT REGARDING THE ALLEGED  
MINING OPERATION IN BRGY. LUZVIMINDA, PUERTO  
PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN

Respectfully endorsing the report dated 13 July 2023 regarding the abovementioned subject.

This report pertains to the information that transpired from the news released on Palawan News social media page (Annex-1) where four treasure hunters were allegedly buried by earth materials. The incident happened on 12 July 2023 in the said barangay. Apart from the news released, there was other alleged information that the treasure being acquired/quarried by the person involved in the incident contains gold. However, no physical evidence of gold was observed to support this claim.

For your reference, record, and further instruction(s).

Cc : The Deputy Mayor  
Mini City Hall Luzviminda  
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

DENR MIMAROPA REGION  
CENRO PUERTO PRINCESA

**RELEASED**

NO:

DATE:

BY:

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7-14-23  
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**NORMA D. CAYATOC**  
DMO IV



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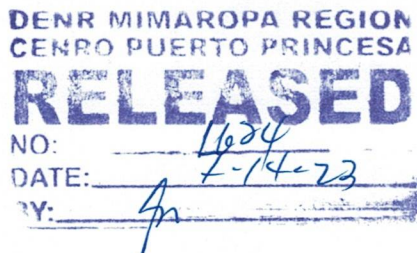
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Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
**COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE**  
MIMAROPA Region  
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

13 July 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

**FOR :** The Community Environment and  
Natural Resources Officer  
Brgy. Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

**FROM :** The Undersigned

**SUBJECT :** ON-THE-SPOT REPORT REGARDING THE ALLEGED  
MINING OPERATION IN BRGY. LUZVIMINDA, PUERTO  
PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN



**Background Information**

Verbal information was received by the undersigned from the Office of the PENR Palawan regarding the alleged mining operation in Brgy. Luzviminda. The information transpired from the news released on Palawan News social media page (Annex-1) where four treasure hunters were allegedly buried by earth materials. The incident happened on 12 July 2023 in the said barangay. Apart from the news released, there was other alleged information that the treasure being acquired/quarried by the person involved in the incident contains gold. Deputy Mayor Rolando Amurao Sr. then initiated a joint monitoring to assess the area, hence, this investigation.

**Findings and Observations**

1. The subject area is geographically located at 09° 40' 04" N, 118° 42' 50" E within Brgy. Luzviminda, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan (Figure 1). A tax map was also provided by the City Assessor's Office for the location of the area (Annex-2). The area is ~27 kilometers away from CENRO Puerto Princesa City and can be reached within 35 minutes of four-wheel vehicle travel.
2. A courtesy was first paid to Deputy Mayor Amurao in the Mini City Hall of Puerto Princesa located in Brgy. Luzviminda (*see Photo Documentation*). Present at the hall were PNP Irawan Station personnel, LGU of Luzviminda, and Bandera News. During the brief meeting with the joint-monitoring team, it was mentioned by Deputy Amurao that a 100 feet deep well was excavated in the area. It was initially intended to be a deep well for the water supply of the mango plantation adjacent to the subject area. The well, however, measures 16 by 20 feet, and the excavation has been ongoing for three years now. The owner of the lot was Mr. Ricardo Pucot but the operation for

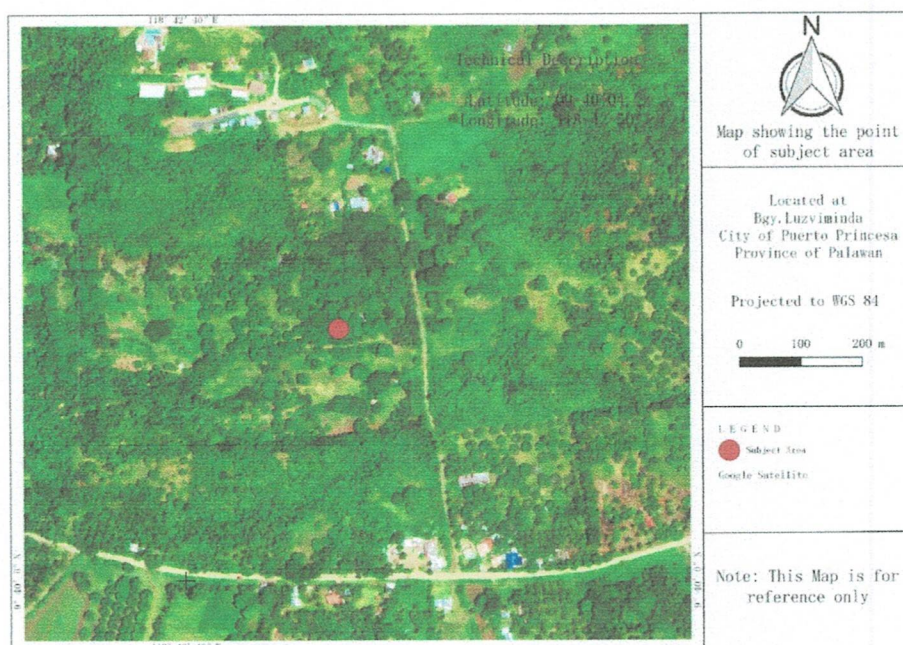


the excavation was managed and financed by a certain Korean national named Mr. Kim. At present, the water in the pit is 1.5 meters deep. It was clarified by the LGU during the briefing that no person was buried and five out of seven workers have only lost consciousness within the pit (one of which is a 15-year-old). They were all successfully rescued by the BFP after the incident was immediately escalated to the authorities. These five personnel are currently at the local hospital of Palawan.

3. At the site, a makeshift tent surrounded by stockpiles of earth materials was noted. Adjacent to the pit were numerous shells and chert nodules which were said to be acquired at a depth of 70 feet (*see Photo Documentation*). Different apparatus and equipment were also observed in the area such as water pumps, pulley, ropes, hoses, hard hats, boots, etc. At the entrance of the pit, a supporting structure made of timber framework and wire mesh providing stability to the walls was also observed. The 16 by 20 feet pit was affirmed during the validation.

Mr. Pucot mentioned during the investigation that the initial plan for the pit was to establish a well to be used as a water supply for his mango plantation. However, the plan was changed later when alleged deposits of “gold” or other precious materials were detected in the area at the 70 feet mark which resulted in the three-year excavation project. No physical evidence was observed to further support the claimed deposits in the area.

Moreover, a certain Mr. Angel Duran was said to already have certain documents from the National Museum in relation to their operation according to Mr. Pucot. No such document was presented to the visiting authorities during the monitoring.




**Figure 1.** Location map of the investigated pit in Brgy. Luzviminda, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

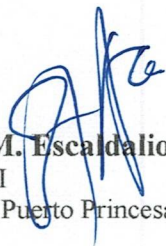
### **Comments and Recommendations**

1. The local government of Brgy. Luzviminda is recommended to issue a stoppage order to ensure that no further incident will occur. Close monitoring of the site is also suggested to ascertain that no further excavation will ensue.
2. To furnish the National Museum of the Philippines with this report for their information and further investigation as the issuing body for permits relevant to treasure hunting activities based on NMP OFFICE ORDER NO. 2011- 83 and Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as The National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009.

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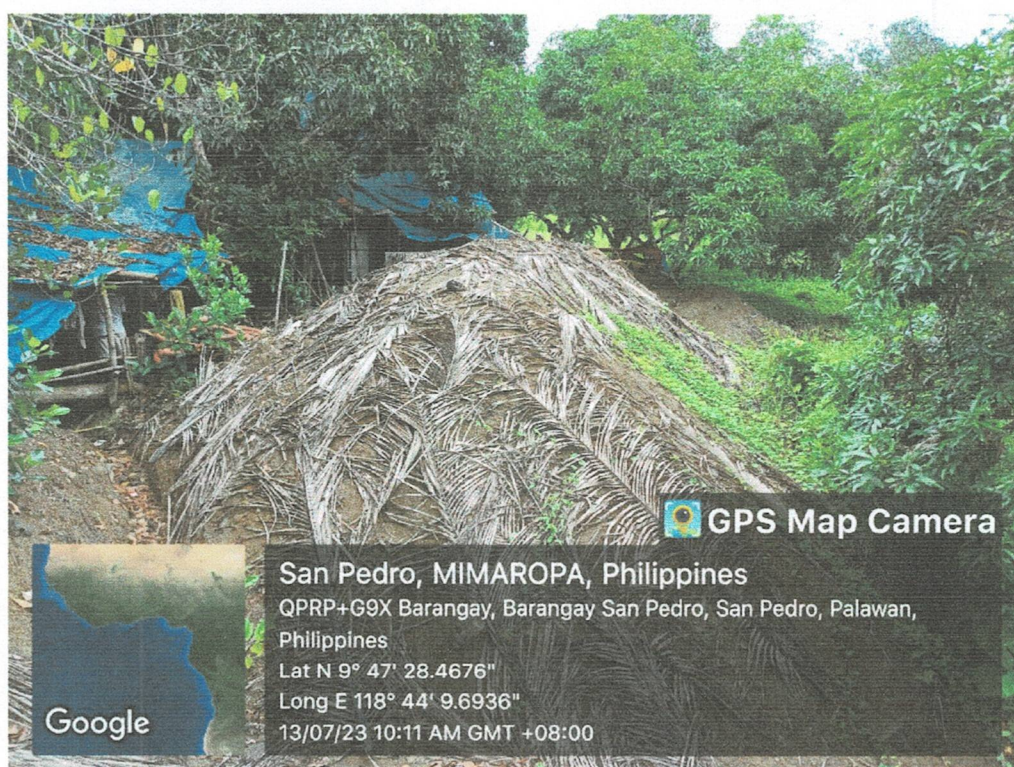
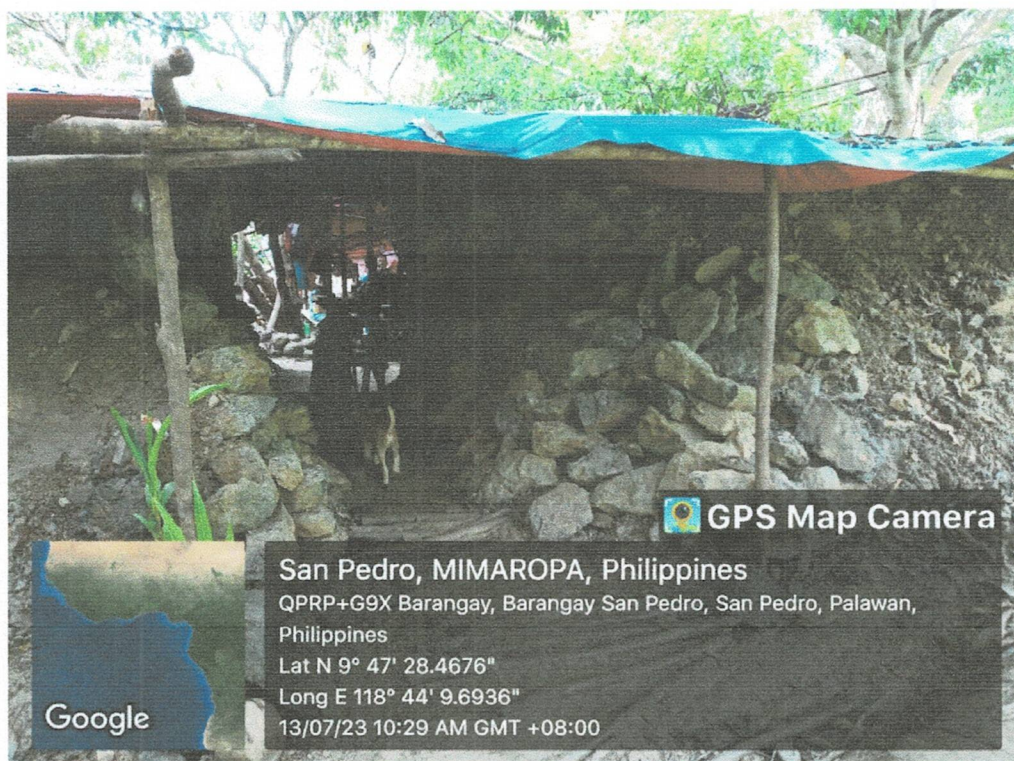
**Casandra Lynda Jalac**  
Science Research Specialist II  
MGB MIMAROPA – Embedded Personnel



**Jessie M. Escaldalio**  
Forester I  
CENRO Puerto Princesa City

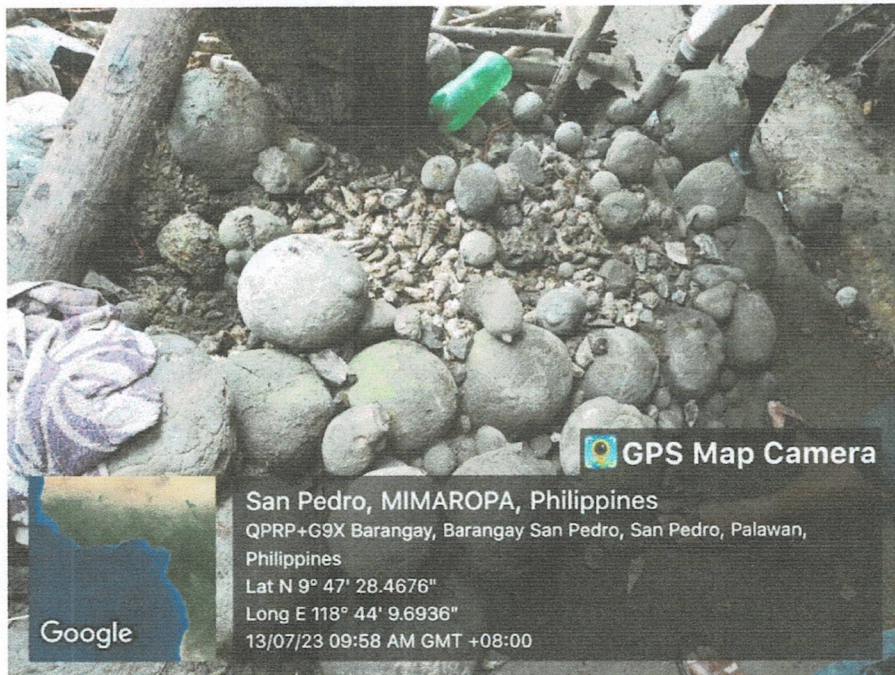


## Photo Documentation



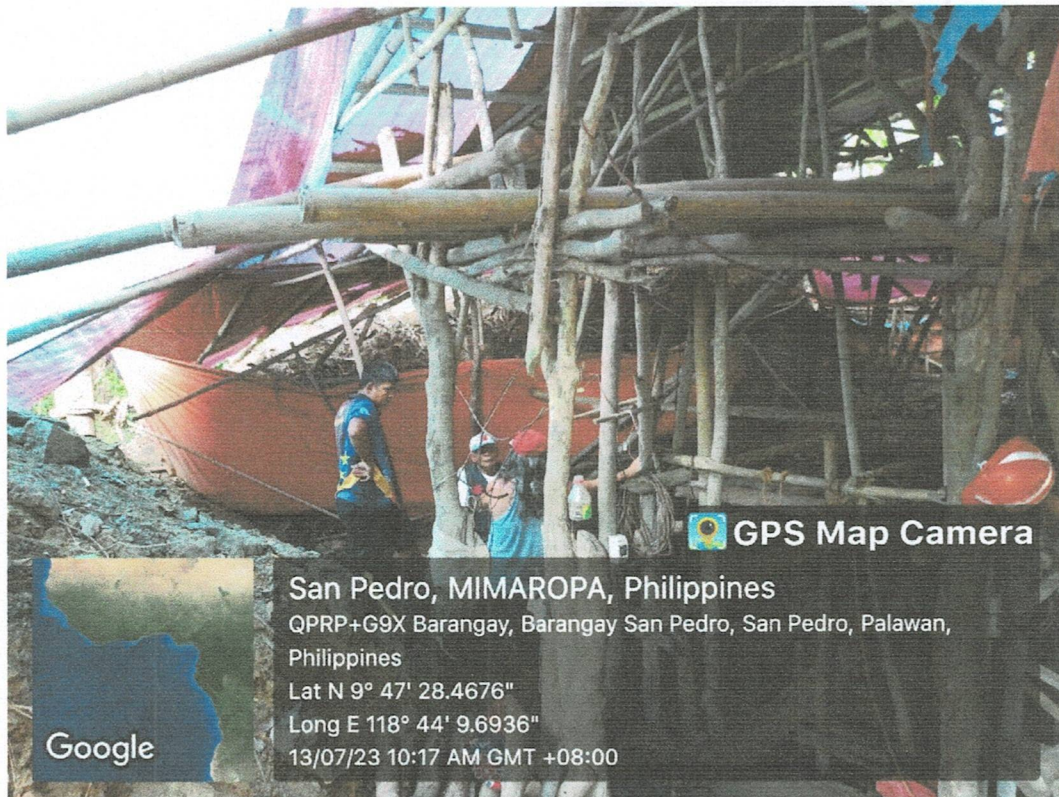
Entrance of the makeshift tent. It can be noted that stockpiles of earth materials were utilized as barrier/wall





Shells and chert nodules retrieved from the pit at 70 feet.





Entrance of the pit. Timber framework noted on site providing stability to the pit walls.



## Annex-1



Palawan News

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JUST IN || 4 NA TREASURE HUNTERS NATABUNAN DIUMANO NG GUMUHONG LUPA SA BRGY. LUZVIMINDA

Ayon sa paunang impormasyon, isinugod ang apat sa satellite clinic sa Brgy. Luzviminda rin.

Isa sa kanila ang sinasabing seryoso ang tinamong pinsala.

Inaalam pa ng [#PalawanNews](#) ang buong detalye ng nangyaring aksidente.



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