

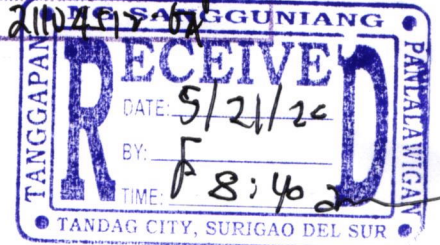


**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**  
 Kagawaran ng Kapaligiran at Likas Yaman  
 Caraga Region

Refer to: *Committee on Environmental Protection and Ecology*



**MR. EDGAR G. PEREZ, II, JD.**  
 Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan  
 Province of Surigao del Sur  
 Tandag City, Surigao del Sur



Dear Mr. Perez:

*Environmental Greetings!*

This acknowledges receipt of Resolution No. 818-26, titled *“Earnestly Requesting the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) – Caraga Region XIII, Butuan City to submit a report in relation to the raid conducted on February 4, 2026, which busted alleged illegal mining sites and seized heavy equipment in the Municipality of Barobo initiated by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and Police Regional Office Caraga,”* dated February 16, 2026.

Please be informed that an anti-illegal mining operation was carried out through the concerted efforts of the Enforcement Division-DENR Regional Office, DENR-PENRO Agusan del Sur, CENRO Bunawan, Regional Intelligence Unit (RIU)-13, 14SAC, 1SAB, PNP-SAF, and 1303rd RMFB-13 on February 4, 2026. The operation targeted contested areas situated along the boundary of Purok 6, Barangay Guinhalinan, Barobo, Surigao del Sur, and Purok 8, Brgy. Mate, San Francisco, Agusan del Sur.

During the operation, it was verified that mining activities were being conducted without the necessary permits or contracts, resulting in the apprehension of three (3) excavator, one (1) Nissan Navara Pick-up, large basin on process mineral and other several items with estimated market value of Php 13,859,369.00 and arrest *in flagrante delicto* of two (2) Chinese nationals and three (3) Filipino individuals.

1. **Xiaohua Zeng**, 51, resident of Hunan Province, China;
2. **Jun Tang**, 46, resident of Guangxi, Zhuang Autonomous Region, China;
3. **Rolan Tagbe Bad-e**, 43, resident of Brgy. Taglibas, Bayugan City;
4. **Roland Procia Quia-ot**, 29, resident of Brgy. Taglibas, Bayugan City; and
5. **Sidro Daprosa Musico**, 35, resident of Brgy. Taglibas, Bayugan City.

While the suspects were initially detained at the Barobo Municipal Police Station, they were subsequently transferred to the San Francisco Police Station following technical verification by the Chief of the Surveys and Mapping Division. The verification confirmed that the specific site of the illegal activity falls within Purok 8, Brgy. Mate, San Francisco, Agusan del Sur.

Consequently, criminal charges have been filed before the Provincial Prosecutor’s Office of Agusan del Sur for violations of Sections 102 and 103 of Republic Act No. 7942 (Philippine Mining Act of 1995) under NPS Docket No. 13-03-INQ-26B-045.

The seized items, conveyances and heavy equipment are now deposited at the CENRO Nasipit depository area.



PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR  
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**OSSP-26-05869**

On February 5, 2026, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau–Region XIII (MGB-13) issued a Certification stating that based on the megascopic analysis of samples collected on-site, the materials were identified as fine sand containing traces of gold-associated minerals. Nevertheless, samples of the seized minerals was forwarded to the MGB-13 laboratory for their further and detailed analysis.

Likewise, the Bureau of Immigration was also coordinated and informed of the arrest of the two (2) Chinese nationals for custody and further appropriate action, as the matter falls within the mandate of their agency. In response, the BI wrote a letter dated February 9, 2026 to the Chief of Police of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, requesting temporary safekeeping of the Chinese, awaiting for approval from their Commissioner the Acceptance of Custody.

Additionally, on February 9, 2026, the team from DENR and PNP filed a case through inquest proceedings against the Respondents for violation of Sections 102 and 103 of Republic Act No. 7942 under NPS Docket No. 13-03-INQ-26B-045.

In view of the results of the operation, the case record including the seized mineral materials, conveyances and equipment will be turned over to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) for the conduct of appropriate confiscation and disposition proceedings, consistent with the existing mining laws and regulations. Close coordination with the Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Immigration (BI), and the concerned offices will be undertaken to ensure conviction of the case and charges to the full extent of the law, against the perpetrators.

This operation underscores the importance of inter-agency coordination in enforcing environmental and mining laws and serves as a firm commitment by the government to protect natural resources and uphold the existing laws.

The operation successfully halted illegal activities that threatened the environmental integrity of the border province between Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur. While the activity was ultimately determined to be within the jurisdiction of Agusan del Sur, the vigilance of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Surigao del Sur remains vital in our shared goal of environmental protection.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
**MARITESS M. OCAMPO**  
OIC, Regional Executive Director



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