



Resource Development (Phils.) Inc.

## FEATURE STORY

### Army Commander Reaffirms TVIRD's Best Mining Practices

*Supports the plan to extend its mining operation in the Southern Philippines*



*Colonel Amadeo Azul delivers a keynote message during the 43<sup>rd</sup> founding anniversary of 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade, which is responsible for the province of Zamboanga del Norte. Col Azul thanks TVIRD for being a responsible miner.*

**Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte / February 2013** - An official of the Philippine Army who declares he is an environmentalist throws his support to the plan of TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD) to continue its mining operation in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte in Mindanao, reaffirming that it practices responsible mining.

Col. Amadeo Azul, commanding officer of the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade, which is responsible for Zamboanga del Norte and the cities of Dipolog and Dapitan, joined the three chief executives of the provinces of Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga Sibugay and the Subanen tribal leaders in the province who support the extension of TVIRD's mining operation that is scheduled to cease in the last quarter of 2013.

TVIRD, a local affiliate of Canada-based TVI Pacific, currently operates copper and zinc in Sitio Canatuan, in Siocon town. Located Northeast of the municipality, Canatuan is home to more than 2,000 Subanens, the biggest ethnic group in the Peninsula.

### **Possible mine life extension**

Yulo E. Perez, Vice President for Operations has already advised TVIRD's employees since last year that after almost ten years of successful operations, the company is expected to wind-up its mining activities by the end of the year, following the depletion of copper ore materials.

Since the enactment of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, TVIRD was the first local company to secure a mining license and has since operated its gold, silver, copper and zinc mineral processing operations in Canatuan. To date, it has provided steady employment to local residents and contributed over P700 million in tax revenues to the government. TVIRD's mining operations also contributed to upgrading Siocon's classification from fourth class to a first class municipality, which was confirmed by the town's local government.

Perez, however, said that just a few kilometers from its current mining pit is an area where the company has a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) application currently on hold as a result of the pending implementing guidelines of Executive Order (EO) No. 79, Section 4 of which says that no new mineral agreements shall be entered by and between the government and contractor until a legislation rationalizing the existing revenue sharing and mechanism shall have taken effect. The MPSA application area has yet to be drilled to determine the presence of economically mineable deposit.

TVIRD is set to implement the roll-out of the same successful business model in Bayog as well as its sustainable social and environment programs, pending the DENR's issuance of its Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) and Declaration on Mining Project Feasibility (DMPF).

### **Responsible mining leaves a lasting impression**

Participants who toured the mine site and its facilities are particularly impressed with how the company manages its tailings from the plant and its program to rehabilitate mined-out areas and those affected by its operations.

"I've seen how mining destroys the environment. As pro-environment I shut down illegal mining operations because of the destruction it made," Col. Azul said. As a result of a well-protected environment, Siocon continues to be the one of province's rice granaries, according to the Municipal Agriculturist's Office.

TVIRD currently mines copper and zinc, and has been operating here since 2004. It has helped propel development in the once sleepy town of 48thousand residents inhabited by Christians, Subanens and Muslims.

"Based on what I saw, responsible mining can be done," Col. Azul was quoted telling the officers of the company. "I saw the open pit. It is properly benched to prevent soil erosion. I also saw the dam and I am impressed with the way the tailings are being managed," he added.

The beautiful scenery in Canatuan made a lasting impression on the Colonel, who went on to suggest that Canatuan be converted into a tourist destination once the mining operation of the company ends.

“Why not transform it (Canatuan) into a tourist destination? This can be another source of income for the Subanens here,” he commented.

### **Various benefits**

Col. Azul also underscored the benefits the Subanens and government enjoy from the company’s mining operation.

“TVIRD offered employment to Siocon and the Subanens. It has solved the unemployment problem of the local government. If I am right, you have more than 1,000 employees and majority of them are Subanens,” Col. Azul said.

“You paid P11.37 million in local taxes. You also paid P64.42 million in excise tax to the national government and spent almost P28 million to fund projects such as farm to market roads, water systems, school buildings and livelihood projects for the lowly community folks. So, I guess I really have to support TVI and its responsible mining advocacy,” he adds.

Col. Azul also appreciated the company for being “mindful” in improving Siocon’s local economy by sourcing its requirements from the town center.

“The ripple effects of buying your needs have triggered economic growth to the town. Just imagine the money that local fishermen get from your company? I am sure the farmers and local entrepreneurs are happy because of what you’re doing,” Col. Azul added.

### **Vanguards of peace**

Col. Azul also acknowledged the company’s contribution to peace and order in the southern part of Zamboanga del Norte through its Special Citizens Active Auxiliary (SCAA) Units.

“TVIRD’s SCAA has helped us and the police in maintaining peace and order in this part of the Peninsula. Its presence curbs lawlessness and extortion in the area. You know our regular forces are very minimal. With your SCAA units, we are able to focus on bigger issues related to peace and order,” he said.

Col. Azul also appreciated that the SCAAs of TVIRD are given better salaries and benefits by the company, which have helped ease the government’s unemployment problem, in addition to solving insurgency.

Ret. Gen. Emmanuel Cayton said that SCAAs of TVIRD are trained not only in securing lives and properties of the company, but are also committed to the Voluntary Principle on Security and Human Rights to instill respect for human rights and those of the indigenous peoples.

“We also trained them as emergency responders to be able to help the communities in times of calamity,” he said.

The company also mobilized various initiatives to address peace and order through sustainable livelihood, like its dedicated *Kubkoban* fishing boat project for former members of the MNLF. A second *Kubkoban* project is close to fruition, this time for fisher folks who are former members of the MILF.

Col. Azul announces he will back up the company’s plan to continue its mining operation in Canatuan and acknowledges the need to promote its advocacy on responsible mining. Following his recent tour, he presented TVIRD with a plaque of appreciation for the company’s meritorious activities during the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade’s 43<sup>rd</sup> founding anniversary. The recognition was accepted by Asst. GM Germidas Las

Pinas and acknowledges TVIRD's environmental stewardship, support to the government's campaign against poverty and efforts to bring lasting peace to Mindanao.

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## Press photos



- 1 **At the Satellite Nursery of the Environment Department.** Col Amadeo Azul (center) is flanked by TVIRD Company Forester Gemma Dandana and Ret. Col. Noli Navarro, Security Department Manager.



- 2 **Feted by the Colonel.** During the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade's 43<sup>rd</sup> founding anniversary, Col. Azul presented TVIRD Assistant General Manager Germidas Laspina a plaque of appreciation for the company's environmental stewardship, support to the government's campaign against poverty and efforts to bring lasting peace to Mindanao.

**About TVI**

*TVI Resource Development (Phils.) Inc., is the Philippine affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration and production of precious and base metals from district scale large system, high margin projects located in the Philippines.*

*We are committed to exploration and mining practices that promote transparency, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the inalienable rights to life, dignity, and sustainable development of our host communities.*

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