

Community Safety a Priority in Rizal Quarry Group of Operators

The Eastern Rizal Miners Association (ERMA), together with 245 participants and 25 barangays within the province of Rizal, attended an emergency awareness and preparedness seminar at the Ynares Event Center in Antipolo City, Rizal.

MAKATI, Philippines - April 27, 2019 - [PRLog](#) -- "We need our people to lead and embrace change. It's going to be about increased productivity, efficiency and being more sustainable and responsive in a social and environmental sense. It's about embracing disruption, not fearing it." - Angelita Lee; President, Eastern Rizal Miners Association (ERMA) & Vice President, Rapid City Realty and Development Corp.

To create a strong safety culture in medium to high risk professions such as quarrying and mining, behaviour-based transformation is necessary. On April 4 2019, the Eastern Rizal Miners Association (ERMA), together with 245 participants from different companies and 25 barangays within the province of Rizal attended an emergency awareness and preparedness seminar at the Ynares Event Center in Antipolo City, Rizal.

In line with celebrating its 23rd Anniversary, Lee invited as one of its speakers, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) doctor, Teofredo 'Ted' T. Esguerra, or popularly known as 'Everest Doc'.

Esguerra is the medical member of the elite medical rescue team: The Specialized Medical Assistance Response Team (SMART) of the Philippine Coast Guard, who specializes on High Altitude Medicine, Wilderness EMS, and Air Medical Evacuation. Aside from being an accomplished flight surgeon, Esguerra was also the Expedition & Wilderness Emergency Medical Services Physician of the Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition Team, hence the name "Everest Doc".

Quite the speaker for an audience composed of quarry operators and miners!

Close to an advocacy, Esguerra drills down to his rapt audience the need to be prepared even before a calamity strikes. Esguerra says *"disaster preparedness is a skill that shouldn't just be taught in our workplaces. It should start from the home. For a country that is scourged with yearly calamities, it is crucial that we are equipped with life skills in the most literal sense of the word!"*

More than just an association

Aside from its annual safety awareness and fire prevention seminars, Eastern Rizal Miners Association (ERMA) has spearheaded and continue to maintain the 'Agro-Forestry Project' (Reforestation) under former President Aquino's National Greening Program, and established a school in partnership with TESDA, called the Rizal Quarry Academy, Inc., that offers technical skill courses suited for those engaged in the mining and quarrying industry wherein the Development of Mining Technology and Geosciences (DMTG) of Rizal Quarry operators are being used as its fund.

Founded with the mission of promoting the optimum utilization of the country's natural resources through sustainable development, the Eastern Rizal Miners Association (ERMA) is a group of quarry operators and miners who have coordinated efforts among mining associations, groups, individuals, and other mining entities.

Duterte's 'Build Build Build program' and a responsible quarrying industry

Quarry products provide the basis for our transport network - roads, railways and airports - and for our water and sewerage systems. Without quarries, we would not have the stone, gravel and sand that go into any form of construction. Stone is an essential component, therefore quarries underpin a country's ongoing development and play a vital role in a nation's economy.

It goes without saying that the Philippines needs an effective quarrying industry to supply us with vital materials necessary for our economy. Furthermore, there is a need for responsible and professional practitioners to operate quarries in a way that is safe, productive and good for our environment. The demand for aggregates will get colossal in the months to come, especially under the Duterte administration.

Infrastructure, being one of the top priorities of President Rodrigo Duterte's Administration with public spending on infrastructure projects targeted to reach 8-9 trillion pesos from 2017-2022, is an ambitious program that can be achieved if the players involved in the supply chain are: physically and mentally fit, equipped to perform their tasks in a safe environment, and are professionally trained. Groups such as the Eastern Rizal Miners Association is one of the organizations that try to do their part in helping make this vision a reality.

This event was also attended by Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Calabarzon representative Socorro Hernandez, Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) Officer Mr. Loel Malonzo and Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Officer Nathaniel Ladia, with media partner Ka Felix Tambongco of DZRJ.

ERMA's member companies include Republic Cement & Building Materials, Inc., Solid Cement Corporation, Lafarge Holcim Aggregates, Inc., Rapid City Realty and Development Corporation, Teresa Marble Corporation, Hardrock Aggregates Corporation, Gozon Development Corporation, Monte Rock Corporation, A.C. Equities, Inc., Millex Construction & Development Corp., LDD Drilling and Blasting Management Consultancy, Inc., Orica Philippines, Nitro Asia Company, Inc., Delta Earthmoving Drilling and Blasting Management Group, B.M. Explosives, Inc. and Equirent, Inc.

Current **ERMA Officers** are President - Angelita Lee, VP for Internal Affairs - Annie Dee, VP for External Affairs - Rafael Baldueza, Secretary - Vicente Pulvinar, Asst. Secretary - Christian Neis, Treasurer - Luisa Noche, Asst. Treasurer - Lolita Robles, Auditor - Ariel Yson, PRO - Gil Castro, Cherry White Tan, Mann Mercado, Raymond Gatlabayan, and Advisers - Veronica Lee, Louie Sarmiento, Ed Dacanay.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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