

AMMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 581 AND REGULATING PANNING OR SLUICING FOR GOLD INSIDE MINING CLAIMS OR IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE LANDS

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1150, June 06, 1977

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/9f8d27188fb8/>

WHEREAS, Presidential Decree No. 581 was enacted to curb "highgrading" or the theft of gold from a mining claim or mining camp which is a serious problem affecting both the gold mining industry and the government;

WHEREAS, in order to further strengthen the purposes of Presidential Decree No. 581, it is necessary to regulate or prohibit certain acts or activities, among which are gold "panning" or "sluicing" in public or private lands, and the use or possession of raw gold, gold amalgam, or mercury within a mining claim or mining camp;

WHEREAS, gold panning or sluicing which has been increasing lately should be a regulated activity, such that while it may provide a source of lawful livelihood to individuals without resulting in a loss to the government of foreign exchange or taxes generated by the gold produced from such activities, necessary safeguards or protective measures may be adopted against such activity as a subterfuge for highgrading activities;

WHEREAS, "highgraders" use mercury in extracting the gold content from mined gold-bearing rocks thereby producing what is known as gold amalgam and in which form the surreptitious extraction of the stolen gold from the mines or the mine site is greatly facilitated;

WHEREAS, mercury is not a household necessity in a mining camp and the possession by a mining employee thereof inside the camp gives rise to the suspicion that the same will be used to amalgamate gold;

WHEREAS, making punishable the unauthorized possession by any person of raw gold, gold amalgam, or mercury within a mining camp or mining claim will further strengthen the objectives of Presidential Decree No. 581;

NOW, THEREFORE, I FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby issue this Decree amending Presidential Decree No. 581, and regulating panning or sluicing for gold inside mining claims or in public or private lands as follows:

SECTION 1. Subject to the provisions hereof, the panning or sluicing of loose sediments for the purpose of extracting gold from creeks, streams or rivers inside mining claims, and from private or public lands, shall be allowed.

SEC. 2. An individual may apply for a permit to pan or sluice with the Mines Regional Officer having jurisdiction over the area upon payment of an application fee of P30,000. The permit shall cover an area of not more than 2,000 square meters and shall be for a period not exceeding three (3) months renewable for the same period.

SEC. 3. No permit for panning or sluicing shall be issued unless the claim owner or landowner or government agency concerned shall have consented in writing to such panning or sluicing: Provided, however, That if the mining claim or claims are covered by an operating agreement, the consent shall be given by the operator.

SEC. 4. It shall be unlawful to employ minors in any panning or sluicing operation, or to conduct such operations during nighttime.

SEC. 5. The activities to be permitted shall be limited to panning by hand or sluicing by the use of sluice boxes. No drilling, blasting, crushing or grinding by machineries or similar activities shall be allowed. The claim owner or operator, landowner or government agency concerned shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever for damages, injuries or deaths arising out of or resulting from such operations.

SEC. 6. All recovered or extracted gold in any form from panning or sluicing as herein authorized shall be sold only to authorized dealers as defined in Section 7 hereof: Provided, That the mining operator, claim owner, or landowner in that order shall have the preference to buy the gold recovered from their properties: Provided, further, That authorized buyers shall retain 11 1/2% of the gross value of the gold bought, 1 1/2% to accrue as ad valorem tax and 10% as royalty to the claim owner, landowner or government agency concerned, as the case may be: Provided, finally, That if the mining claim or claims are covered by an agreement, the 10 % royalty, except when there is an agreement to the contrary, shall be divided equally between the claim owner and the operator.

SEC. 7. No person shall engage in the business of buying and selling gold without securing a license from the city or municipal treasurer of the place where his principal office is located. He shall keep complete and accurate records of all his transactions such as the names and addresses of the persons he deals with, the quantity of gold bought or sold, the consideration paid or received, and the date of each transaction. Any such person dealing in gold who fails to comply with these requirements shall, upon conviction, be penalized with arresto mayor.

SEC. 8. Any person who shall pan or sluice inside a mining claim or on private or public lands, without the consent of the claim owner or operator, private landowner or the government agency concerned, and without a permit from the Mines Regional Officer shall be guilty of "highgrading" and shall, upon conviction, be penalized with arresto mayor.

SEC. 9. The unexplained or unauthorized possession by any person within a mining claim or mining camp of gold in the form of dust, flakes or grains shall be unlawful and such person shall, upon conviction, be penalized with arresto mayor.

This Section shall not apply to any person within a mining claim or mining camp who has in his possession mercury or gold amalgam which is a necessary and an integral part of an instrument or equipment or to a dentist or to the operator of a mining claim and its authorized employees producing mercury as a principal or by-product or to the possession of mercury or gold amalgam used in the assay laboratory of the operator of the mining claim or other legitimate possession of mercury.

For the purpose of this Decree, a gold amalgam is an alloy formed by mercury with gold.

SEC. 11. Any person who without a permit sells, or who knowingly buys or acquires gold in the form of dust, flakes, grains, or gold amalgam from person without a permit shall be guilty of theft as an accessory and shall, upon conviction, be penalized with arresto menor in its maximum period.

SEC. 12. For purposes of this Decree, the term "claim owner" shall mean a holder of valid and subsisting mining claim (s). "Sluice box" refers to rectangular, wooden launder provided with side walls and cross pieces of sawn lumber or round poles, metallic screen, jute cloth or a combination of both, on its floor to retain gold; "panning" shall mean recovering gold by the use of open round wooden or metal containers dishpan-like in appearance by skillful manipulation with hands; and "sluicing" shall mean recovering gold by the use of sluice boxes.

SEC. 13. All laws or regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. This Decree shall take effect immediately. Done in the City of Manila this 6th day of June, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-seven.

(Sgd.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS
President of the Philippines

By the President:

(Sgd.) JACOBO C. CLAVE
Presidential Executive Assistant

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.