



PORT DIGEST

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The Official Newsletter of the Bureau of Customs



P8.98-M cigarettes, fireworks busted at South Harbor

Two 40-footer vans from China which contained misdeclared cigarettes and fireworks worth P8.98 million were busted by the Bureau of Customs- Port of Manila (POM).

One container was consigned to Paragon Platinum International Trading Corporation with office located at unit 108, The Centennial Bldg., 375 Escolta St., Binondo Manila.

Records filed by the importer disclosed the signing customs broker as Bernandine Miranda of 3034 Bagac St., Manuguit, Tondo, Manila.

Paragon's shipment which arrived on February 21 was declared as brackets but customs authorities found boxes of cigarettes. "The hidden cigarettes were discovered by the initiative of the

Office of the District Collector through profiling," Commissioner Isidro Lapeña said.

An alert order no. A/POM/20180227-001 was issued by the district collector lawyer Vener Baquiran to prevent the release of the smuggled cigarettes.

Lapeña disclosed the value of the cigarettes at P8.2 million.

Another shipment consigned to Power Buster Marketing with office address at Baria Compound, Paradahán 1, Tanza, Cavite was alerted on February 27 for alleged misdeclaration.

Legal Service Director lawyer Yasser Ismail Abbas recommended the issuance of alert order on the

(See **8.98-M cigarettes** page 7)

Drug test for BOC personnel



BOC personnel and other key officials of the bureau underwent a surprise random drug testing on March 19 at the POM Building. Commissioner Isidro Lapeña and other deputy commissioners led the drug testing.

Public Consultation



Bureau of Customs conducted Public consultation of the draft CAO on "Amended Rules on Consolidated Shipments of Balikbayan Boxes".

The consultation took place on March 5, 2018 at the President's Room, 4th Floor, POM Building, Bureau of Customs, Port Area, Manila.

Retirees commended



The Bureau of Customs, led by Commissioner Isidro Lapeña, acknowledged the BOC retirees who have served the bureau for more than 20 years. Congratulations and many thanks to our retirees!

BOC nabs suspect of smuggled marijuana oil

The Bureau of Customs nabbed the suspect of the seized smuggled marijuana oil, also known as kush oil, on Wednesday (Feb. 28) at the Central Mail Exchange Center.

Beau Aldrich D. Siquian, the suspect, claimed the package on February 28 which contained two pouches. Reports from NAIA showed the other pouch inside the package belongs to a certain Gian Carlo Santos of Baguio City. Siquian has a declared address at 302 Sto. Rosario St. Brgy. Plainview, Mandaluyong City.

The 24-year old male suspect presented a valid Philippine passport to claim the package.

The package which arrived on February 26 came from a certain Jonjon

L. Pulido of 22327 #01 Moneta Ave. Carson, California.

The suspect declared the contents as electrical pen set/ink wax with a declared value of \$300.00.

Customs authorities estimated the seized drugs to be worth more or less P360,000 in street value.

"It is a protocol to subject all packages to 100% physical examination with the presence of the claimants. The customs examiner in charge found items as declared, however, the pungent odor of the items prompted the examiner to conduct further verification," Commissioner Isidro Lapeña said.

The matter was referred to Customs Anti-Illegal Drugs Taskforce (CAIDTF)



and NAIA-Interagency Drug Interdiction Task Group (NAIA-DITG) for K-9 examination and field-testing which turned out to be positive for cannabis.

Also present during the inspection are agents of X-ray Inspection Project, Enforcement and Security Service-NAIA.

"These drug pushers are exhausting all means to smuggle illegal drugs in the country, they even send drugs through couriers," Lapeña said.

"I have directed BOC-NAIA to examine all suspicious packages and be strict in document checking.

"There will be more apprehensions by the Bureau of Customs as we are implementing stricter border security," Lapeña added.

The suspect and the seized drugs are now turned over to Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency for further investigation.

Importers, brokers indicted for gross undervaluation and large-scale agricultural smuggling



The Bureau of Customs - Bureau's Action Team Against Smugglers (BATAS) filed on Monday, March 26 smuggling charges before the Department of Justice against two importers and customs brokers for gross undervaluation of imports and large-scale agricultural smuggling.

Charged are owners and customs brokers of Granstar Premiere Sports Corporation and Seven Myth Marketing.

The first smuggling complaint involved Granstar's shipments of 112 units of brand new Vespa scooters which originated from Singapore and arrived at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Charges were filed against Fabian A. Go with office address at Lot 71 Unit B1, Innovative St., Subic Bay, Gateway Park, Phase 1, Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Go is the owner and major stockholder of Granstar Premiere Sports Corporation.

The same case was filed against customs broker Norinel O. Quezana who processed the importation of the

subject illegal shipments.

"The importer and the customs broker have violated sections 2503 (Undervaluation, Misclassification, Misdeclaration in Entry), 3602 (Various Fraudulent Practices against Customs Revenue), 3601 (Unlawful Importation) of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines (TCCP), and article 172 (Falsification by Private Individuals and Use of Falsified Documents) of the Revised Penal Code," according to Customs chief Isidro Lapeña.

Granstar's shipments were alerted on February 10, 2015, due to gross undervaluation of imports. A Warrant of Seizure and Detention (WSD) was issued on February 16, 2015, by then District Collector Arnulfo Marcos of the Port of Subic.

According to the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) operatives who conducted the examination on September 17, 2014 of the subject containers, the \$50,400 or P2,504,128 total declared value of the imported goods was "considerably

lower" compared to the \$3,448.24 per unit actual value of the goods.

Based on BATAS complaint-affidavit, the declared value of the shipments plus duties and taxes amount to only P3,647,770, but based on the value provided by the Import Assessment Service (IAS) on January 26, 2015, the actual dutiable value of the shipments plus duties and taxes amount to P28,297,167.46. There appeared a staggering 87% discrepancy in value.

"Proceedings followed and finally on July 28, 2017, the Port's District Collector ordered the forfeiture of the subject shipment," BATAS Executive Director Lawyer Yasser Ismail Abbas said.

The said shipments arrived at Subic on January 22, 2014 and entries were only filed by September 2014.

The second smuggling charge involved two shipments from China consigned to Seven Myth Marketing which arrived at the Port of Cebu on November 27 and 29, 2017.

Proceedings followed and finally on July 28, 2017, the Port's District Collector ordered the forfeiture of "the subject shipment," BATAS Executive Director Lawyer Yasser Ismail Abbas said.

The said shipments arrived at Subic on January 22, 2014 and entries were only filed by September 2014.

The second smuggling charge involved two shipments from China consigned to Seven Myth Marketing which arrived at the Port of Cebu on November 27 and 29, 2017.

Charged were Leoncio Victor S. Mangubat, the registered owner of Seven Myth Marketing, with office address at Room 01 1202-D Palanca Compound, Gen. Luna St., Brgy. 674, Ermita, Manila and customs broker Mary Faith D. Miro with office address

at Roosevelt St., Tulic, Argao, Cebu.

The consignee declared the two shipments as ceramic tiles but was found to contain 7,150 sacks of 50 kilograms Sinandomeng Aguila and Sinandomeng Mayon rice with estimated duties and taxes of P10,013,503.50.

The consignee imported fifteen (15) containers but it was discovered during the examination that only one container actually contained ceramic tiles.

The shipments were alerted on December 7, 2017 based on the derogatory information received by the Bureau and was subsequently seized on December 13, 2017.

The case was filed against Seven Myth for violation of Section 1400 (Misdeclaration, Misclassification, Undervaluation in Good Declaration), in relation to Section 1401 (Unlawful Importation or Exportation) of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA), and Article 172 in relation to Article 171 (Falsification by Private Individuals and Use of Falsified Documents) of the Revised Penal Code.

Since the value of the shipments is over Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00), the consignee and broker were likewise charged for economic sabotage for large-scale agricultural smuggling under R.A. 10845 or the CMTA.

"We will make sure that importers and brokers blatantly violating Customs rules and regulations will face legal action and revocation of Customs accreditation. I have given BATAS Executive Director Lawyer Yasser Ismail Abbas strict instructions to go hard on smugglers and intensify the filing of cases against them, big or small," Lapeña declared.



Customs chief inspects delivery warehouse of illegally withdrawn containers in Bulacan

Customs chief Isidro S. Lapeña on March 26 led the inspection of the Bulacan warehouses where alleged contents of most of the illegally withdrawn 105 containers at the Asian Terminal Inc. (ATI) container yard were delivered.

The inspected warehouse was located at Homms Blk. 2, Lot 3 Phase 5 Sterling Industrial Park, Libtong, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

"The BOC raiding team together with Local Government Unit of Brgy. Libtong and PNP Meycauayan found a warehouse full of crates of tiles and several logbooks with dates of arrival of containers and their container numbers" Commissioner Lapeña said.

Upon cross-checking the logbook of the warehouseman against the list of containers subject to alert orders, the team found 32 similar containers numbers.

Twenty of the 32 twenty-footer containers belong to Premiere Oak Lumber and Wood Products while the remaining 12 twenty-footer containers belong to Abundancegain Indent Trading Corp.

Another adjacent warehouse located at Smartylane St. Sterling Industrial Park, Brgy. Libtong, Meycauayan, Bulacan, also subjected to inspection, revealed numerous crates of tiles which are identical in the first warehouse.

"No logbook was found by the agents. However, these tiles could be part of the goods contained in the illegally withdrawn containers due to its similarity in the tiles found at the first warehouse.," Lapeña added.

Both warehouses are reportedly owned by Homms Trading Corporation.

The Office of the District Collector of Port of Manila has issued a warrant of seizure and detention against the shipments of Premiere Oak Lumber and Wood Products Corporation, Imperialfoods and Agricultural Products, and Paragon Platinum Int'l Trading Corp.

Customs police are now deployed at the two warehouses to prevent release of shipments contained therein.

Discovery of illegally withdrawn containers

The BOC found out the incident of the illegally released alerted containers on March 19 when the customs examiner was about to conduct a 100% physical examination on the shipment of Abundancegain Indent Trading Corp.

The importers according to the import entries show the containers belong to Abundancegain Indent Trading Corp., Imperial Foods and Agricultural Products, Megaabundancesteel Indent Trading Corp., Paragon Platinum International, Premiere Oak Lumber and Wood Products, and Spectrum Highlands Mktg. Corp.

The shipments which all came from China were processed by customs brokers Bernadine Miranda, Mohamad Salman, Homaidi Sarip Ibrahim.

Lapeña clarified that alerted shipments are subject to 100%

physical examination and only his office is allowed to authorize release of the alerted shipments.

"Unfortunately, the ATI has allowed the release of the containers without proper clearance from my office," he added.

The BOC will investigate the BOC and ATI personnel involved in the release of the alerted shipments.

Revoked accreditation

Ten importers and three customs brokers' accreditation were revoked by the Account Management Office on March 22. Among them are Abundancegain Indent Trading Corp., Abundanceprime Chemicals Trading Corp., Cymar International Incorporated, Herco Trading Inc., Imperial Foods And Agricultural Products, Megaabundancesteel Indent Trading Corp., Paragon Platinum International, Yanyan International Phils. Inc., Premiere Oak Lumber and Wood Products, and Spectrum Highlands Mktg. Corp.

Also, accreditation of customs brokers Bernadine Miranda, Mohamad Salman, Homaidi Sarip Ibrahim were revoked for violating the CMTA.

Investigation of customs personnel, collusion with port operator

As of March 26, as a result of the investigation the Formal Entry chief, assistant chief, head of POM's Data Monitoring Unit, and other BOC employees involved are recommended

for preventive suspension.

According to Lapeña, the CIIS has also been strictly ordered to conduct deeper probe into the involvement of all customs officials and employees who may have dipped their hands to manipulate this incident. An investigation is also ongoing to determine the possible connivance among the personnel of ATI and the Bureau.

"I think this incident has been going on for quite some time and this is not the first time that they have done this. This is a well-entrenched syndicate and I am determined to dismantle and totally stop them," the BOC chief said.

Customs uncovers counterfeit beauty products



The Bureau of Customs uncovered boxes of counterfeit beauty and skin care products, and other merchandise on separate occasions in a warehouse at Tondo and Binondo, Manila. With Customs chief Isidro Lapeña are ESS Director Yogi Ruiz and CPD chief, SPAS Marlon Alameda.

RESTRICTED IMPORTS

CUSTOMS 101

The importation of the following RESTRICTED GOODS IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT WHEN AUTHORIZED BY LAW OR REGULATION.

RESTRICTED GOODS

REGULATING AGENCY



Dynamite, gunpowder, ammunitions and other explosives, firearms and weapons of war, or parts thereof

PNP-Firearms and Explosives Office (PNP-FEO)
Email Add.: feocsg@pnp.gov.ph
Tel. No.: (02) 723-0401 local 4588



Roulette wheels, gambling outfits, loaded dice, marked cards, machines, apparatus or mechanical devices used in gambling or the distribution of money, cigars, cigarettes or other goods when such distribution is dependent on chance, including jackpot and pinball machines or similar contrivances, or parts thereof



Lottery and sweepstakes tickets, except advertisements thereof and lists of drawings therein



Marijuana, opium, poppies, coca leaves, heroin or other narcotics or synthetic drugs which are or may hereafter be declared habit forming by the President of the Philippines, or any compound, manufactured salt, derivative, or preparation thereof, except when imported by the government of the Philippines or any person duly authorized by the Dangerous Drugs Board, for medicinal purposes

Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB)
Email Add.: info@ddb.gov.ph
Tel. No.: (02) 929-1753 / (02) 929-4544



Opium pipes or parts thereof, of whatever material

Any other goods whose importation is restricted.

PORT OF CLARK IN ACTION

BOC-Clark meets with Korean Community & stakeholders

On March 7, 2018, BOC-Port of Clark, headed by District Collector Maritess Martin, organized a Consultative Meeting with the Korean Community Association (KCA) and stakeholders to further settle issues and concerns on customs procedures and processes being implemented at the Arrival Area of Clark International Airport.

The discussion had successfully addressed issues raised by Korean nationals which include the request for an additional baggage x-ray scanning machine to accommodate the increasing number of passengers, installation of CCTV camera inside the customs office and the designation of an interpreter to avoid language barrier between customs officials and arriving passengers.

BOC Clark retrain personnel on CMTA updates and TRAIN

BOC - Port of Clark hosted a two-day seminar/workshop to keep customs personnel informed, particularly those in the frontline services, of the latest updates under CMTA and salient features of the TRAIN law, on February 14-15, 2018.

Dr. Jesus G. Llorando, a Member of the BOC TRAIN Advisory Team and currently the Acting Airport Collector of the Kalibo International Airport under Port of Iloilo, facilitated the two-day training and provided practical examples and exercises on classification and excise tax computations.





MARCH TOP PERFORMERS

Certificates of commendation were awarded to Bureau Customs' top performing ports for their successful collection of lawful duties and taxes that contributed to improved revenue performance of the bureau for the month of March.

Commissioner Isidro Lapeña, with Deputy Commissioner Gladys Rosales of Internal Administration Group, led the awarding of certificates to district collectors.

BOC exceeds March revenue target

Majority of the ports exceeded their collection target for March contributing to the 0.6 percent increase in the revenue performance of the Bureau of Customs.

"Based on the initial report from the BOC Financial Service, a total of P45.398 billion revenue was collected, exceeding the P45.133 billion target for the month of March by P265 million," Commissioner Isidro S. Lapeña said.

Data showed that despite the two non-working holidays in March, majority or 12 ports maintained and exceeded their revenue collection for the month, namely:

- * Batangas - collected P11.542 billion in revenue, 10.5 percent up against the P10.449 billion target;
- * Limay - collected P2.896 billion in revenue, 5.5 percent up against the P2.746 billion target.
- * Cebu - collected P2.189 billion in revenue, 7.6 percent up against the P2.034 billion target;
- * Davao - collected P1.755 billion in revenue, 21.1 percent up against the P1.449 billion target;
- * Subic - collected P1.655 billion in revenue, 1.9 percent up against the P1.624 billion target;
- * Cagayan de Oro - collected P1.625 billion in revenue, 27.4 percent up against the P1.275 billion target;
- * San Fernando - collected P278 million in revenue, 13 percent up

- against the P247 million target;
 - * Clark - collected P154 million in revenue, 29.8 percent up against the P119 million target;
 - * Tacloban - collected P68 million in revenue, 241.6 percent up against the P20 million target;
 - * Legaspi - collected P22.10 million in revenue, 0.5 percent up against the P22 million target;
 - * Surigao - collected P4 million in revenue, 262.7 percent up against the P1 million target; and
 - * Aparri - collected P6 million in revenue, 37.5 percent up against the P4 million target.
- This year's collection is P7.286 billion or 19.1 percent higher compared to the P38.11 billion collection in the same period last year.
- Meanwhile, the ports which failed to hit the target are the following:
- * Manila - collected P5.776 billion in revenue, 14.9 percent lower than the P6.785 billion target;
 - * Manila International Container Port - collected P12.625 billion in revenue, 9.28 percent lower than the P13.917 billion target;
 - * Ninoy Aquino International Airport - collected P3.094 billion in revenue, 25.9 percent lower than the P4.175 billion target;
 - * Iloilo - collected P176 million in revenue, 27.8 percent lower than the P244 million target; and

- * Zamboanga - collected P700,000 in revenue, 96 percent lower than the P21 million target.
- While these five ports did not meet the target, Lapeña still recognized their contributions to the overall revenue collection of the agency.
- Following this development, the district collectors of these ports and others concerned will be eventually replaced in compliance to the earlier directive that district collectors, deputy collectors for assessment, chief of Formal Entry Division, examiners, appraisers, and other BOC personnel performing assessment functions will be relieved.
- Lapeña commended all the top performing ports and encouraged all ports to be on board and double its collection efforts to hit the target until end of the year.

MICP collects more than half billion from Mondelez as payment of excise tax under train law

Manila International Container Port (MICP) received two (2) checks from Mondelez Philippines Inc. amounting to PHP 541,981,124.16 for its payment of excise tax and VAT due to its importations for the months of January to February, under the TRAIN Law. Such collection was a result of Mondelez' sense of corporate responsibility and MICP's diligence to collect the correct duties and taxes. MICP District Collector Atty. Balmirson Valdez conducted a consultation meeting with the Top Multinational Corporations transacting with MICP on March 15, 2018 to encourage other big companies such as Mondelez to work with the Bureau of Customs in ensuring that the taxes due to the government are paid.



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PORT DIGEST welcomes your feedback. Kindly email to piad@customs.gov.ph



BOC, CCBI tie up to strengthen trade facilitation

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) on March 21 officially inked the Memorandum of Agreement with the Chamber of Customs Brokers, Inc. (CCBI) which strengthens cooperation between the two parties to further secure facilitation of legitimate trade.

The MOA provides that a member of the CCBI will stand as representative of the importer, owner or its customs broker or authorized representative during the conduct of the physical examination of goods under exceptional circumstances such as but not limited to, when the importer, owner or its customs broker or authorized representative is absent or cannot be located.

MICP Briefing and public consultation on the application of Section 701 of the CMTA

Briefing and public consultation with the multinational corporations on the application of Section 701 of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act or the Valuation System. The consultation took place on March 15 at the Manila International Container Port.



P8.98-M cigarettes (from page 1)

shipment which arrived on December 31, 2017.

"Upon inspection, we discovered boxes of fireworks instead of the declaration which is footwear," Lapeña said.

The fireworks will be turned over to Philippine National Police- Firearms and Explosives Office for proper disposition while the cigarettes are subject to destruction.

The shipments are now waiting for the issuance of warrant of seizure and detention while cases will be filed against the importers for violation of Section 1400 of RA 10863 or Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

"These apprehensions are results of the enhanced border protection of the ports and the continued suspension of the Green Lane," Lapeña said.

Aside from the successful series of apprehension, the Customs chief reported that BOC exceeded the revenue target for February by 5.3%.

Initial reports from Financial Service showed a total collection of P43.9billion against the P41.709 billion target; posting a surplus of P2.2 billion.

5 new Customs execs assume post



The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has assigned four new district collectors as part of the bureau's major reshuffle.

Carmelita "Mimel" Talusan, former district collector of Port of Subic, formally assumed on Friday, March 16, as the new district collector of Ninoy Aquino International Airport. She replaced former collector lawyer Vincent Philip Maronilla.

Lawyer Ma. Liza T. Sebastian of the Revenue Collection Monitoring Group and lawyer Lyceo C. Martinez of Compliance Monitoring Unit were also appointed as district collector of Port of Surigao and Port of Zamboanga, respectively. They replaced the former Surigao collector Lilibeth Mangsal and Zamboanga collector lawyer Jesus Balmores.

Mangsal is the new acting deputy

collector for operations of Port of Cebu.

The former collectors were relieved after failing to meet the February collection target.

It can be recalled that Commissioner Lapeña had previously issued a strict directive to intensify collection performance and ordered the relief of district collectors who will not reach the February target.

Fourteen of the 17 collection district has exceeded the target which results to a collection of P43.674 billion revenue against the P41.709 billion target last month which posted a surplus of P 1.965 billion.

Meanwhile, NAIA Deputy Collector for Passenger Services Arsenia Ilagan has officially assumed her plantilla position as district collector of Port of Legazpi, replacing former collector lawyer Ma.

Lourdes Mangaoang.

Mangaoang is now the NAIA Deputy collector for Passenger Services.

"Her [Mangaoang] assumption in NAIA as deputy collector is not due to poor performance in revenue collection but for her to take a bigger responsibility," Lapeña clarified.

Mangaoang's reassignment to NAIA Passenger Service is expected to boost the revenue collection of the said port.

In a separate occasion, Commissioner Lapeña swore into office Director Jessie L. Cardona of the Anti-Terrorism Council Program Management Center as head of the BOC's accreditation office, AMO.

"He is one of my trusted men in the public service and I know he will resolve the issues in the Account Management Office in no time," Lapeña said.



Lapeña welcomes delegates of WCO Sub-Regional Train-the-Trainers Workshop on Programme Global Shield

Bureau of Customs (BOC) Commissioner Isidro S. Lapeña on March 13, welcomed the Customs officers from Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries and other heads and representatives of state at the opening session of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Sub-Regional Train-the-Trainers Workshop on Programme Global Shield (PGS) held at MIDAS Hotel in Pasay City.

Representatives from South East Asia and the Pacific composed of countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam are among the participants of two week-long workshop.

Also present are officials and representatives from the Philippine Bureau of Customs, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and Philippine National Police (PNP).

The PGS is among the international efforts of WCO designed to interdict illicit diversion and trafficking of chemical precursors, detonators and transmitting devices used by terrorists and other felonious organizations in manufacturing improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The use of chemical and explosive materials is rampant among terrorist groups because the precursor chemicals needed to manufacture IEDs are inexpensive and widely available.

The objectives of PGS is to provide Customs officers the knowledge and skills in the detection and handling of precursor chemicals. The program is also focused on promoting cooperation among customs and police administration against illegal trafficking and diversion of IEDs.

PGS continue to raise awareness of the emerging threat posed by IEDs across the globe.

Meanwhile, Lapeña expressed his support to the WCO's campaign against IED threats by ensuring that national security and border protection remains a priority of the Bureau of Customs.

"In the face of challenges and menace of terrorism, safeguarding our borders is

a shared responsibility," Lapeña said.

The Commissioner is accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Teddy Sandy Raval of Enforcement Group, the bureau's arm in securing the national border against illicit trade such as chemical precursors and other explosive materials used in manufacturing IEDs.

The WCO workshop on Programme Global Shield (PGS) co-hosted by BOC is sponsored by the Security Project Fund of Japan.

PGS resource trainers include WCO Assistant Project Manager for Security Program Juan Manuel Mancilla Lopez, including WCO accredited PGS trainer Chandra Prakash Goyal and PGS Technical Expert Estheshamul Hoque.