



The Official Newsletter of the Philippine Bureau of Customs

# PORT SENTINEL

Volume 9

Issue No. 58

September 2017



## CUSTOMS NABS MICP EMPLOYEE, TWO COHORTS FOR ALLEGED CORRUPTION

see **CUSTOMS NABS** ▶ page 6

### Customs Chief abolishes command center, vows to institute reforms

**Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapeña signed on August 31, the memorandum order abolishing the Command Center and its power to issue alert orders.**

This he announced before the employees of the bureau during his first flag raising ceremony as Customs chief.

Customs Memorandum Order No. 14-2017 has reverted to the deputy commissioners of the Intelligence Group, Enforcement Group, and all district collectors nationwide the authority to issue alert orders.

All authorized officers to issue alert orders shall examine the shipment within 48 hours or 24 hours for perishable goods from the issuance the alert order and submit the report to the Office of the Commissioner.

Alert orders are given to shipments with derogatory information for alleged undervaluation due to fake documents, misclassification, and misdeclaration.

The sole office given the power to issue

alerts, the Command Center, was created under Customs Special Order 45-2016 by the former Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, which also acts as central office overseeing the general operation of the bureau.

With CMO 14-2017, the former Command Center has been abolished and will be converted to an Operation Center of the bureau less the power to issue alert.

While addressing the employees in the flag ceremony, Lapeña said "this is my way of showing my full trust and confidence to the officers and men of the bureau."

"I am giving a clean slate for everybody," said the Customs chief as he bared some of his plans to address corruption and at the same time increase Bureau's revenue.

He reiterated the call to stop the culture of "pasalubong" and "tara" and to strictly implement the "no gift and no take policy," adding that these illegal practices are bringing the name of the agency down

the drain.

To institute accountability and boost internal cleansing within the agency, Lapeña plans to implement a one-strike policy against erring bureau officials and employees through intensified counter-intelligence efforts.

"Once I receive reports of your involvement with corrupt practices and such reports are validated, you will see immediate action based on the offense committed," Lapeña said as he warns employees and officials.

He also urged the public to arrest, by virtue of citizen's arrest, anyone who would use his name to facilitate unlawful activities in the agency, adding that he will be observing zero tolerance for corruption.

The Commissioner also emphasized the need for an improved incentive and reward system for all personnel who remain persistent in performing their duties and responsibilities with commitment, competence, and integrity.

Another priority of Commissioner Lapeña is to improve the revenue performance of the agency.

To achieve this, the Customs chief said BOC personnel must perform jobs properly and strictly implement the customs laws, rules and regulations to improve the bureau's revenue efficiency.

The BOC chief calls on bureau officials and personnel to help him institute reforms that would regain the public's trust.

"I am not here to pass judgment. I do not care about the past, I do not mind the various issues thrown to the bureau and the reports that I received, but I am here to institute changes, changes that would help regain public trust and confidence to the bureau."

"Help me reform the bureau, help me in my mission to liberate the bureau from the clutches of corruption and hit its collection target as ordered by the President," Lapeña said.

INSIDE :

COMMISSIONER LAPENA: BOC HITS HIGHEST DAILY COLLECTION, FIRST IN HISTORY |p.6|  
P24.4-M WORTH ABORTION PILLS SEIZED AT NAIA |p.4| JAPAN CUSTOMS COURTESY CALL TO BUREAU OF CUSTOMS |p.8|

## Efforts to bust enviro hazards lauded

**Commissioner Isidro Lapena lauded Enforcement and Security Service' Environmental Protection Unit (ESS-EPU) for their excellent service in combatting environmental crime on September 18 during the regular flag raising ceremony.**

This after the United Nations (UN) Environment awarded EPU as one of the winners of the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award on September 7 at Bangkok, Thailand.

"We emailed our entry to the UN Environment citing EPU's seizures and apprehension from June 2016 to June 2017," EPU Chief Capt. Roberto Gines

said.

Out of the 193 entries coming from various organizations, "One of two selected is the Bureau of Customs' Environmental Protection Unit," he added.

As a unit of Enforcement Group, EPU is tasked to curb illicit trade of hazardous substances, controlled chemicals, and ozone-depleting substances that were found to violate environmental agreements like Basel Convention and Stockholm Convention.

The other winner selected by the UN Environment is the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of the General Administration of Customs China.

## Customs seizes vessel for using fake permits

**With the enhanced cooperation between the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) countries, the Bureau of Customs-Cagayan de Oro Port (BOC-CDO Port) seized on September 8 a vessel estimated to be P35 million worth of duties and taxes, and its cargoes for allegedly falsifying a special permit to operate in the BIMP-EAGA area.**

Commissioner Isidro Lapeña said Villa Shipping Lines Inc., the owner of the 26-year-old Japan-built ship, used M/V Jake Vincent Seis to avail of the BIMP-EAGA privileges of not paying duties and taxes.

"The vessel's operation is limited within the country's domestic bounds however, it sailed within the BIMP-EAGA area using a fake permit which is a "modus operandi" employed by some shipping lines," the Customs chief added.

The vessel was reportedly carrying 1,450 metric tons of dried coconut copra from Indonesia and is supposed to be delivered to Davao Bay Coconut Oil Mills Inc. in Jimenez, Misamis Occidental when the BOC and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) team boarded the ship on August 28.

After diligently searching the ship, the agents found a BIMP-EAGA special permit which was used to legitimize their activities.

"Customs then coordinated with the Maritime Industry Authority

(MARINA) who validated that the vessel's special permit to operate in the BIMP-EAGA was fake. We asked them to present the proof of payment of the duties and taxes for the cargoes but the 19 Filipino crew could not give us any which led to the seizure of the vessel and the cargo," Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) Intelligence Officer II Alvin Y. Enciso said.

Port of Cagayan de Oro District Collector Jamail Marohomsalic explained "if the vessel is plying within the BIMP-EAGA route, the ship is covered by the Free Trade Agreement that would allow the vessel to deliver and pick up cargo within the four member countries—Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. If it was imported for this purpose it would have been spared from paying the duties and taxes."

"But if the ship was converted to travel only within domestic waters, they would have to get clearance from government agencies such as the MARINA and the BOC," Mahoromsalic added.

Port of Cagayan de Oro District Collector Jamail Marohomsalic issued a warrant of seizure and detention upon the joint recommendation of Ozamiz Sub-port Collector Ma. Chona Sarte, CIIS, and the Enforcement and Security Service personnel.

The vessel is now in the custody of BOC Cagayan de Oro for further investigation.



## BOC-Davao, AFP, other agencies ink MOA to strengthen border security

**Lawyer Erastus Sandino B. Austria, district collector of the Bureau of Customs-Port of Davao joined on September 15 other government officials in signing a memorandum of agreement (MOA) creating the country's first Inter-Agency Border Security Coordinating Council.**

The MOA was a product of the series of inter-agency meetings which the Eastern-Mindanao Command (East-Min Com) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) coordinated.

The council hopes to curb the entry of terrorism as well as prevent illegal activities in its area of responsibility. According to a press statement by the East-Min Com, the Martial Law currently in place has driven the AFP to strengthen border security.

"[We are] continuously strengthening the border security to prevent terrorism, violent extremism, and other crime syndicates from

entering the country via the southern border," the press statement reads.

After the signing of the MOA, representatives from the regional government agencies elected the council's officers.

East-Min Com, represented by Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero, holds the chairmanship. Representatives from Police Regional Office (PRO) XI, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP XI), Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao (NFEM), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) XI, and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) XI were the five elected vice chairpersons.

Other signatories to the MOA are the Philippine Ports Authority-Port Management Office Davao, Philippine Coast Guard, National Bureau of Investigation-Central Mindanao Regional Office, and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency XI.

# CUSTOMS 101 | FAQs

## Cross-Border Transfer of Local and Foreign Currency



### Can a person import/export local currency (Philippine Peso)?

**YES.** A person may bring into or take out of the Philippines, or electronically transfer legal tender Philippine notes and coins, checks, money order and other bills of exchange in an amount **NOT MORE THAN PHP 50,000**

### Can a person still import/export an amount exceeding Php 50,000?

**YES.** A person may still bring out of the Philippines an amount exceeding PHP 50,000 as long as a prior written authorization is secured from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

### What happens if a person imports/exports more than PHP 50,000 without BSP written authorization?

The local currency brought in our intended to be taken out shall be subject to seizure (and/or forfeiture).

### Can a person import/export foreign currency?

**YES.** A person may bring into or take out of the Philippines foreign currency, as well as other foreign currency-denominated bearer money instruments, in an amount **NOT MORE THAN USD 10,000** or its equivalent.

### Can a person still import/export an amount exceeding USD 10,000 or its equivalent?

**YES.** Provided that the person importing/exporting such foreign currency (or monetary instrument) shall **DECLARE THE SAME IN WRITING** and furnish information on the source and purpose of the transport of such currency (or monetary instrument).

### Is there a form that must be accomplished?

**YES.** The person bringin in or taking out such foreign currency (or monetary instrument) must fill out a **Foreign Currency Declaration Form** upon arrival at, or before departure from a Philippine airport.



### Chinese suspects nabbed for smuggling scheming device at NAIA

Two Chinese passengers were arrested by the Bureau of Customs-Ninoy Aquino International Airport (BOC-NAIA) on September 25 after carrying smuggled scheming device at NAIA Terminal 1.

Gong Yongjie, 26, and Wang Ji, 22, both from Guangzhou, China were on board China Southern flight CZ 3091 when Customs agents stopped them after their baggage exhibited x-ray image irregularities.

"Their baggage was immediately examined by the customs examiner in the presence of other customs-NAIA agents and they found 187 pieces of brand new One Time Password Cards and 153 pieces of used ATM, debit cards and new sim cards," Maj. Jaybee Raul Cometa, head of X-ray Inspection Project (XIP) said.

OTP cards are used as a cloning device to access data in the ATM cards and the generated passwords will be sent to the sim cards which will initiate the transfer of funds.

Customs chief Isidro Lapeña said the suspects were brought in for inquest after bringing in prohibited goods and failing to provide any permit from the owner of the ATM and debit cards.

"The apprehending examiner recommended the issuance of warrant of seizure and detention against the goods to the district collector of NAIA while charges were filed against Gong and Ji at Pasay City Fiscal's Office," he added.

The suspects violated Sections 1113 (f), 1401, and 118 (g) of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and RA 8484 or the Access Device Act.

The suspects are now detained at ESS NAIA District Office.

Lapeña disclosed on Thursday some foreign and domestic airline passengers took advantage of the non-intrusive examination of hand-carried baggage and luggage.

To address the increasing incidents of smuggling and drug trafficking in airports, "we are upgrading our facilities by adding more x-rays here in NAIA and we will also be procuring additional x-rays for the other ports," the commissioner said.

Meanwhile, according to Cometa, two units and one unit of brand new Rapiscan x-ray machines are now installed at NAIA Terminal 1 and 3 respectively. Sixteen more x-rays will be installed at the three terminals of NAIA.

### BOC-NAIA boosts anti-smuggling efforts, installs more x-rays

To address the increasing incidents of smuggling and drug trafficking in airports, the Bureau of Customs-NAIA is upgrading their facilities by adding 19 x-rays in the three terminals of NAIA, the Customs chief Isidro Lapeña bared on September 28.

Two units and one unit of brand new Rapiscan x-ray machines are now installed at NAIA Terminal 1 and 3 respectively. Sixteen more x-rays will be installed at the three terminals of NAIA.

The winning bidder, Casedist Inc., will be installing 10 brand new units

of Fixed Baggage X-Ray Machine; seven brand new units of Hand-Carried Baggage X-Ray Machine; and two brand new units of Mobile X-Ray Machine.

"The previous pronouncement of President Duterte not to open hand carried bags and luggage is loud and clear. With these new x-rays, his orders will be well implemented," Commissioner Lapeña said.

X-ray examination of hand carried baggage is mandatory in the airports, "we can guard our borders while implementing the non-intrusive examination of bags," he added.

### P24.4-M worth abortion pills seized at NAIA

The Bureau of Customs on September 4 intercepted an estimated P24.4 million worth of Misoprostol (Cytotec), co-amoxiclav pills at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3.

NAIA Customs personnel stopped two Filipino passengers on board SQ918 Flight from Singapore, Reuben Jesse Bautista and Glenn More Gaddi after their baggage showed image irregularity during the x-ray examination.

The customs examiner, who conducted the examination in the presence of the customs appraisers, Enforcement Security Service agent, Customs Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force (CAIDTF) supervisor, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and Xray Inspection Project agents, found 34,910 tablets of Pfizer Cytotec Misoprostol 200 UG; 40,000 tablets of oral Pfizer Cytotec Comprimidos Misoprostol 200 MCG; and 3,500 tablets of Augmentin 625 MF Film Tablet Co-Amoxiclav after conducting 100% physical examination. CAIDTF agents confirmed that the seized tablets are used for illegal abortion.

Customs agents requested the passengers to present the import declaration and corresponding Food

and Drug Administration import permit.

However, the customs examiner said, "they failed to declare their importation and the corresponding FDA import permit which led to the seizure of the baggage."

The Deputy Collector for Passenger Services recommended a warrant of seizure and detention to NAIA District Collector Edgar Macabeo for violation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act Section 118, Bureau of Food and Drugs advisory no. 02-02ii and Food, Drugs, Devices and Cosmetics Act.

The BFAD advisory warns all drugstore owners, pharmacists, consumers and all others concerned against dispensing/selling and using an unregistered drug product known as Misoprostol (Cytotec).

Moreover, the advisory said the manufacture, importation, exportation, sale, offering for sale distribution, of transfer of any drug or device which is not registered with the Bureau is considered a violation of R.A. 3720 as amended otherwise known as the "Food, Drugs, Devices and Cosmetics Act".

The three baggage are now at the In-Bond Room at Terminal 3 while the investigation is still pending.



Editor-In-Chief: Maria Gerty D. Pagaran

Associate Editor: Mary Joy T. Lopez

Editorial Staff: Karren April A. Noronio, Writer Jessil Garlando

Photographers: Jerome L. Monta Mark Kevin Pilar

Contributors: Raiza Dapilin, Writer Moris Almojuela, Writer Marife Folloso, Writer Tonette Marticio, Writer

PORT SENTINEL welcomes your feedback. Kindly e-mail to piad@customs.gov.ph

## CSC commends Customs official



Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapeña graced the awarding ceremony and personally commended Collector Simon

**The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has selected as a recipient of the Presidential Lingkod-Bayan Award an official of the Bureau of Customs.**

John Simon, collector of the sub-port of Iligan was recognized as Regional Winner in the CSC's search for this year's Outstanding Government Workers under the Presidential Lingkod-Bayan Award. The award was given last September 15 at the Mallberry Suites, Business Hotel in Cagayan de Oro.

Simon was appointed as acting Customs Collector of Iligan, a sub-port under the collection district of Cagayan de Oro, in September 2013. As Collector,

he has implemented various programs and policies that helped improve trade facilitation, and enhance Customs procedures at the said port.

Simon said that he wants to contribute to national economic competitiveness as well as to the restoration of Iligan City into an industrial hub in Northern Mindanao. All his programs and policies are aligned with four governing principles: Focus; Quality Management; Service Culture; and Effective Communication.

He believes that through improved communication and quality service, reforms would be possible in the agency. He gives importance to the role of every stakeholder and BOC personnel

in establishing efficient Customs administration that every Filipino can be proud of.

His reform efforts are evident in the collection performance of the sub-port, exceeding their collection targets from the period 2013 to 2016. In 2013 Iligan port exceeded the collection target by 32 percent. The following year, they collected more than P178 million or a 0.06 percent increase in revenue. In 2015 and 2016, they exceeded their targets by 32% and 48% respectively.

"For the last four years, we had collected more than P1,105,679,444," he said. The collected revenue was added to the coffers of the state to be used for

government expenditures.

Collector Simon also led the filing of cases against National Steel Corporation, recovering a total of P110 million unpaid duties and taxes from its various importations from 1997 – 2000.

"As the guardian of our nation's borders and the front liner in safeguarding our port from customs fraud, economic criminality, drugs, and instruments of terror, we were able to develop an effective and efficient detection and prevention capability. But most importantly, we have the courage to say no to the never-ending enticing offers from smugglers and illicit traders," Simon added.

## Lapena visits south, inspects CDO seized shipments

**Customs Commissioner Isidro S. Lapeña recently visited port of Cagayan de Oro (BOC-CDO) to inspect the P215 million total estimated worth of goods seized by the port including M/V Jake Vincent Seis that was seized on September 8.**

The seized goods were either prohibited items, misdeclared, or lack the necessary import permits and other required documents.

Alvin Y. Enciso, officer-in-charge of the port's Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) said that an investigation is ongoing to "determine if the M/V Jake Vincent Seis's owner

purposely evaded paying the P35 million import duties and taxes."

M/V Jake Vincent Seis was plying within the BIMP-EAGA route when its operations were only limited to domestic routes in the Philippines.

The CDO port also previously apprehended more than P5 million worth of used clothing from Japan on August 17. The used clothing, stored inside two 40-footer containers originated from Japan and was consigned to Kornet Express Inc.

In another operation conducted on August 8, BOC agents uncovered a 20-footer container of steel ethylene cylinders from China. The shipment

valued at P1.5 million was declared as aluminum ethylene cylinders and consigned to Linde Philippines (South) Inc.

Two used cargo trucks found dismantled inside two 40-footer containers were also seized on July 20. The shipments, estimated to be worth P3 million came from Japan and consigned to Ghulam Traders International Corporation.

The CDO port also apprehended more or less P5 million worth of China red onions on August 4. The two 40-footer containers from China, consigned to Govgen Agri Products International, arrived in the country last July 23.

Meanwhile, District Collector Jamail

Marohomsalic reports that CDO port was able to post a revenue surplus of P1,553,511,484 in their collection target covering the period from January to August. It collected P8,951,856,484 against its target collection of P7,398,345,000.

Commissioner Lapeña commended the officials and personnel of the Port of Cagayan de Oro and the sub-ports, MCT, Ozamis, and Iligan, for their accomplishments, adding that he hopes other ports will also be able to reach their targets for the remaining months of the year.

## CUSTOMS NABS

Following the order of Commissioner Isidro Lapena to conduct thorough port inspection, agents of the Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) and Enforcement and Security Services (ESS) arrested a male employee of the Manila International Container Port (MICP) and two cohorts for alleged corruption inside the container yard in MICP, Saturday morning.

The suspects, MICP Security Guard II Allan Pangkalinawan, is assigned at the Pier Inspection Division while the other two, cohorts are reported hao siao in the bureau.

“We have received directives from the commissioner to validate reports of port congestion at MICP, however, while inspecting we saw one PID personnel and two hao siao who are facilitating the containers in the yard,” Director Yogi Ruiz of ESS said.

The ESS Director said the suspect is paying the hao siao P2,000 per day in exchange for their service in guarding the containers.

A video showing the hao siao assisting the guard in the releasing of cargoes was taken by the agents as proof of their activity.

Commissioner Isidro Lapena already directed the CIIS to conduct a thorough investigation on the incident.

“We will build a strong case against them. For now, Pangkalinawan will be relieved from office. Hindi pa natin madetermine kung saan nanggagaling ang pinapasahod niya na P2,000 per day. If found guilty of illegal act, he will be removed from service,” he added.

“Hindi rin natin alam kung ano pa ang ginagawa ng mga hao siao doon at kung sino ang nagpapasahod sa kanila, chances are it came from tara or from extortion (we still don’t know the source of the P2,000 salary per day, chances are it came from tara or extortion),” Lapena said.

The customs chief in his previous pronouncement said he will give all BOC employees a clean slate but if proven to be guilty, “I will impose one strike policy.”

“Let this be an eye-opener to all employees to start correcting their ways,” Lapena said.

The suspects are now in the custody of the BOC.

Commissioner Isidro Lapena already directed the CIIS to conduct a thorough investigation on the incident.

“We will build a strong case against them. For now, Pangkalinawan will be relieved from office. Hindi pa natin madetermine kung saan nanggagaling ang pinapasahod niya na P2,000 per day. If found guilty of illegal act, he will be removed from service,” he added.

“Hindi rin natin alam kung ano pa ang ginagawa ng mga hao siao doon at kung sino ang nagpapasahod sa kanila, chances are it came from tara or from extortion (we still don’t know the source of the P2,000 salary per day, chances are it came from tara or extortion),” Lapena said.

The customs chief in his previous pronouncement said he will give all BOC employees a clean slate but if proven to be guilty, “I will impose one strike policy.”

“Let this be an eye-opener to all employees to start correcting their ways,” Lapena said.

The suspects are now in the custody of the BOC.

# Commissioner Lapena: BOC hits highest daily collection, first in history

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) posted more than P6 billion in collection for two consecutive days of the previous month based on the Financial Service’s preliminary collection report – a first in the history of the agency.

Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapena said that on September 28 and 29, the BOC collected a total of P3,316,889,000.00 and P3,193,804,000.00 respectively. This 3-billion figure is the first in the collection performance history of the bureau, the country’s second largest revenue generating agency.

The BOC also achieved a total cash collection of P39.545 billion for September, regarded also as the highest cash collection achieved for a month based on records.

“The Bureau is happy to report that we were able to make significant improvements in terms of collection. We were looking at the financial reports dating back 2010, and our director for financial service, Cecile Soriano reported that indeed this is

the first in BOC history, even if we reviewed records farther back 2010.”

According to customs chief, the improvement of the collection performance is attributed to 20.92 percent increase in valuation compared to last year of the same period.

The bureau was able to collect duties and taxes for September based on the total dutiable value of imports amounting to P420, 204, 629 compared to the assessed dutiable value of P347, 504,895 of the same month in 2016, despite the higher percentage of non-dutiable of 84.5% from the 81.2% in 2016.

It may be recalled that Lapena called on all district collectors, examiners and appraisers to apply the correct valuation instead of using benchmarking.

September figures also indicate a year-on-year increase of 14.71% in terms of volume of imports. In September 2016, there was a total of 8,504,422 kilograms of imports while current volume posted 9,755,082

kilograms.

In the past, there were monthly collections higher than P39.545 but those are total collections that include the tax expenditure fund (TEF).

TEF is the revenue collected from government importations and are not paid in actual cash by the agencies but instead credited by the BOC from the agencies’ budget.

Preliminary collection report showed that despite the three (3) non-working holidays in September, BOC achieved 96% percent of the total collection, collecting P40.150 billion against the monthly target of P41.753 billion based on Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing (BESF) target.

It was previously reported that the BOC needs to achieve the monthly target of P50.1 billion from September to December in order to hit the full year BESF target of P467.896.

“We will try our best, and I am optimistic that we will be able to fully hit our target by year-end,” Lapena adds.





## BOC busts P2-M smuggled glutinous rice

**The Bureau of Customs busted on September 20 a 20-footer container of glutinous rice estimated to be worth P2 million.**

Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapeña bared the contents of the container as glutinous rice after conducting 100% physical examination on the shipment of Worldwide Apparel Manufacturing Inc.

"The consignee declared it as polyester knitted breast cup, however, during the conduct of x-ray examination, a different image was retrieved from the machine which led to the issuance of alert order as per recommendation of the X-ray Inspection Project (XIP)," Lapeña said.

Head of XIP Maj. Jaybee Raul Cometa said the shipment was not yet 100% physically examined on September 5 due to the absence of the representative from Worldwide Apparel.

RA 10863 Sec. 1129 (c) provides that when regulated goods are subjected to alert order and the assessed duties, taxes, and other charges thereof are not paid within 15 days from notification from the Bureau of the resolution of the alert order, the shipment shall be deemed abandoned.

"Today is the expiration of the 15-day allowance, failure of the consignee to pay the duties and taxes will result in the abandonment of the shipment," Cometa said.

The presence of rice instead of the declared item is a prima facie evidence of smuggling, we will recommend the issuance of warrant of seizure and detention against the shipment to Commissioner Lapeña, Cometa added.

In violation of a provision in the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and Republic Act No. 10845, otherwise known as the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act of 2016, Commissioner Lapeña said the shipment will undergo forfeiture proceedings.

"The shipment will undergo forfeiture proceedings and we will file the corresponding criminal charges against the consignee," the customs chief said.

## Customs seizes P10-M worth luxury cars

**The Bureau of Customs recently seized two luxury cars, auto parts with an estimated value of P10 million at the Manila International Container Port (MICP).**

A used black Mercedes Benz, used white Mercedes Benz, wheel and tires, from Hongkong arrived in August at MICP.

The shipment, declared as containing auto parts, was consigned to Juljerjac Trading with entry number C-206595-17 passed through the X-ray machines which showed image irregularities.

"X-ray Inspection Project (XIP) agents found irregularities in the entry declaration after X-ray results produced questionable images," XIP Head Maj. Jaybee Raul Cometa said.

Maj. Cometa recommended the issuance of alert order against the shipment for the conduct of 100% physical examination.

Lawyer Vincent Philip Maronilla, MICP district collector, said the 40 footer shipment was seized after its shippers violated a provision of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) in relation to Section 3 of Executive Order 156 prohibiting the

importation of used motor vehicles.

"This is a prima facie evidence of misdeclaration hence we will issue a warrant of seizure and detention against Juljerjac Trading's smuggled motor vehicles," he said.

Meanwhile, Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapeña lauded the efforts of the BOC personnel instrumental in the apprehension of these luxury cars.

The cars are now in the custody of the BOC for further examination and evaluation.

## P9-M worth onions, carrots busted at MICP

**With the bureau's intensified campaign against agricultural smuggling, agents of the Bureau of Customs busted four 40-footer containers of red and white onions, and one 40-footer container of carrots worth P7.2 million and P1.8 million respectively.**

The shipments consigned to V2Y International Marketing Co. with office address at Madrigal Bldg., Escolta, Manila, came from China and arrived at the Manila International Container Port (MICP) on July 7 and 13.

MICP District Collector lawyer Vincent Philip Maronilla said the five 40-footer containers were examined on August 7.

"The shipment's declaration said

it contains fresh garlic and apples, however, upon examination, red and white onions, carrots, and garlic were found inside the container vans," Maronilla said.

The declared garlic was covered by a valid import permit from the Bureau of Plant and Industry (BPI) while the red and white onions and carrots were misdeclared and have no import permit prompting BOC to issue warrant and seizure for detention.

According to reports, "The consignee, V2Y International Marketing Co., wrote a letter informing Customs Intelligence that the shipments do not belong to them," said Commissioner Isidro Lapeña.

"This is actually a protection to

our farmers since they also produce red onion. Importing onions is regulated by law because they will be a strong competitor to our local farmers who also produce onion. For the carrot, it will also be seized for misdeclaration," Commissioner Lapeña said.

In violation of a provision in the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and Republic Act No. 10845, otherwise known as the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act of 2016, Commissioner Lapeña said the shipment will undergo condemnation to prevent its entry into the public market.

Due to health and safety concerns, the seized agricultural products will undergo condemnation.



# US Embassy and Japan Customs Courtesy Call to Bureau of Customs (September 2017)



Officials from the Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Japan, led by their Deputy Director-General Sumiya Shibasaki made a courtesy call to the newly-appointed BOC chief, Commissioner Isidro S. Lapeña. A brief exchange on customs updates happening in both countries took place. Mr. Shibasaki also mentioned customs-related trainings that Japan customs can share to their Philippine counterpart.



Officials from the US Embassy Government Contingents led by Economic Officer Brian Breuhaus made a courtesy call to Commissioner Isidro Lapeña.



The embassy commits to provide continuous support to the bureau through sponsored training and workshops.