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**Corruption in the Philippines**

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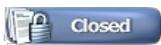
**The Economy, Industry and Development Issues** Current news and events with regards to the economy, industry and urban development issues

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April 7th, 2008, 09:27 AM #281

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### Evading CARP via the biofuels law?

Business World  
<http://www.bworld.com.ph/BW040708/content.php?id=002>

(First of two parts)

WHILE ORDINARY Filipinos face the threat of food shortages caused by dwindling agricultural land, sugar barons in Congress are preoccupied with turning their vast haciendas and other lands into plantations to produce and process biofuels.

One of those engaged in this move is presidential brother-in-law Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, who hurdled last month most of the government requirements needed to convert his family's 157-hectare Hacienda Bacan in Isabela, Negros Occidental into agro-industrial uses, mainly for the production of ethanol.

If the conversion pushes through, farmers charge that Mr. Arroyo will succeed in evading the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, which covers rice, corn and sugar lands. It will nullify the claims of 67 farmer-beneficiaries who have been waiting for more than a decade for the Department of Agrarian Reform to award them Hacienda Bacan. Local DAR officials fear the Hacienda Bacan farmers will generate a big storm of protests.

The impending conversion of Hacienda Bacan not only contradicts supposed policy statements by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that she favored a moratorium on land conversions to preserve the country's agricultural economy. It also shows how lawmakers — including a member of the President's own family — are making a windfall from crafting laws designed to promote their own business interests.

Representative Arroyo declined to be interviewed for this report. His office said the land use conversion issue "doesn't have any relevance" to the Biofuels Act.

Mr. Arroyo's office also said the congressman, currently the chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources, was committed to "environmental protection" and had even begun working on a climate change bill after attending the climate change summit in Bali, Indonesia last December.

In the 13th Congress, Mr. Arroyo co-authored Republic Act 9367, also known as the Biofuels Act of 2006, along with then Negros Oriental representative Herminio Teves and Bukidnon representative, now senator, Juan Miguel Zubiri. They and eight other co-authors in the House and Senate and their families own agricultural lands that can or will provide feedstock for biofuel production.

Biofuels are liquid fuel produced by mixing fossil fuel with oil derived from biomass like sugar, coconut and jatropha. Although there have been studies questioning their overall environmental and economic impact, biofuels are expected to help countries attain energy and economic independence.

Mr. Teves, whose term in Congress ended last year, is already planting jatropha for biodiesel on 10,000 hectares of land in Negros Oriental and has even constructed a jatropha plant that will be operational by 2009.

Meanwhile, Mr. Zubiri's father, former Bukidnon congressman and now governor Jose Zubiri, has been the president of the Confederation of Sugar Producers Association since Sept. 1, 2006. The elder Mr. Zubiri was also once executive vice-president of the Bukidnon Sugar Milling Co. which, senator Zubiri said in a May 2006 news report, will tie up with the Bronzeoak Philippines to build an ethanol plant in Bukidnon. Senator Zubiri himself still owns at least eight hectares of sugar land in Maramag, Bukidnon.

When he was first elected to the House of Representatives, Mr. Arroyo filed the Fuel Ethanol Act of 2004 that was consolidated along with other bills to become the Biofuels Act. He is also the chairperson of Rivulet Agro Industrial Corp., which owns Hacienda Bacan. Mr. Arroyo, however, lists neither Rivulet nor Hacienda Bacan in his 2004 to 2006 statements of assets of liabilities.

The Arroyos own about 500 hectares of land in Negros Occidental. These include Haciendas Bacan,

Grande, Fallacon, and Manolita, according to a DAR report. Bacan and Grande, in particular, are sugar plantations whose ownership has been hotly contested by various farmers' groups.

Documents show Hacienda Bacan, which has belonged to the Arroyo family for decades, as being registered to Rivulet, now chaired by Mr. Arroyo. Task Force Mapalad, a nationwide alliance of about 25,000 farmers seeking land reform, claims, however, that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, actually owns Hacienda Bacan.

"Alam naman natin na kay Gloria Macapagal Arroyo yung lupa (We know that the land is owned by Gloria Macapagal Arroyo)," said Ricky Celis, one of the 67 farmers claiming the land under CARP. "Talagang ayaw nilang bitiwang 'to (They certainly won't let go of the land)."

Mortgaged several times, Hacienda Bacan ran up millions of pesos in unpaid taxes to the municipal government and became a delinquent property that was auctioned off in April 1994 for P176.7 million. A certification of sale of the property issued by the office of the Isabela treasurer states it was sold to Jose Miguel Arroyo married to Gloria M. Arroyo. The First Gentleman's ownership of the property, however, was not annotated at the back of the land title.

Amid calls to put the hacienda under the agrarian reform program when Mrs. Arroyo became president in 2001, Ignacio Arroyo that same year offered the property under the voluntary offer to sell scheme of CARP to get a higher valuation.

The path toward converting the Arroyo sugar plantation began in October 2005 when the Isabela municipal council reclassified Hacienda Bacan from agricultural to agro-industrial land under a six-year comprehensive land use plan it approved through a resolution.

The land use plan, which spans from 2005 to 2010, was upheld by the provincial council in December that year.

Despite Hacienda Bacan's reclassification, DAR provincial officer Teresita Depeñoso said Mr. Arroyo still has to apply for land use conversion with the DAR before he can put up an ethanol plant. He lost no time in doing so.

On Feb. 14, 2007, just a month after President Arroyo signed the Biofuels Act into law, Rivulet sent DAR-Negros Occidental advance copies of the application for conversion of Hacienda Bacan into industrial land.

In January this year, it installed eight billboards in Isabela town notifying the public of its intention to apply for land conversion with the DAR.

The DAR office in Isabela posted last March 3 a notice of Rivulet's land use conversion application and issued just two weeks ago a certification of the company's application.

The last step for Representative Arroyo is to now file these and other documents with the DAR Central Office, in particular the Center for Land Use Policy, Planning, and Implementation, to get his application processed.

DAR municipal agrarian reform officer Jose Defiño said formal protests, if any are filed, may stall approval of Rivulet's application. "Siguradong marami ang mag- protest, mga members ng Task Force Mapalad (Many are expected to protest, especially Task Force Mapalad members)," he said.

Reclassifying and converting Hacienda Bacan to agro-industrial land will exempt it from CARP distribution because R.A. 6657 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law only provides for the distribution of agricultural land not classified as mineral, forest, residential, commercial or industrial land to farmers.

The 20-year-old CARP will expire on June 10 this year. Task Force Mapalad and the Catholic prelates are among the groups seeking an extension of the program.

Agrarian reform lawyer and former DAR Undersecretary Gil de los Reyes said that while the law allows the Arroyos to change their land use to agro-industrial for an ethanol plant, only the area occupied by the plant should be reclassified.

"No factory exists that will occupy the entire 300 hectares. At the most, what will you have [are] 10 [to] 20 hectares that will be converted from agricultural to non- agricultural," he said.

If it pushes through, the ethanol plant will bring a windfall of benefits for the Arroyos. A 100,000 liter-capacity ethanol plant can make at least P3.2 million if ethanol sells at a profitable benchmark of P32 to P35 a liter based on estimates of the Sugar Regulatory Administration.

Even without an ethanol plant, Mr. Arroyo stands to gain more than P10 million annually if sugarcane planted in Hacienda Bacan is sold for ethanol production. The SRA estimates that sugar landowners can expect P65,000 annually for every hectare.

The huge profits to be reaped from biofuels are an incentive for landowners like former congressman and Biofuels Act co-author Mr. Teves who has been growing jatropha trees on 10,000 hectares of leased hillsides in Tamlang Valley, a 24,000-hectare area straddling the municipalities of Valencia, Siaton, and Sta. Catalina in Negros Oriental, since last year. His biodiesel plant is set to start operations in 2009.

Jatropha seeds contain oil that may be processed into biodiesel.

"I leased a denuded area, mostly hills that cannot be plowed by tractor or even by carabao but can still be planted by jatropha," the 89-year-old Mr. Teves said in an interview.

Despite having ended his term as Negros Oriental third district representative in May 2007, he still occupies Room S-119 of the House Representatives, now the office of his nephew, Rep. Henry Pryde Teves.

Jatropha production gradually increases, said Mr. Teves who explained that 2,000 trees per hectare can be planted one year and 4,000 the next. He said jatropha production has opened up jobs for many residents of Tamlang Valley, adding that he offers profit-sharing to employees.

He expects to harvest 10,000 kilos of seeds per hectare after four years. About 3.5 kilos of seeds can produce a liter of oil which, he said, is "similar to bunker oil."

However, agriculture experts from the University of the Philippines-Los Baños have found in a January 2007 study that jatropha only becomes a practical biodiesel feedstock if seeds yield at least 34% oil

content.

The local variety, however, yields less than the practical standard. "Only 28 to 32 percent oil is said to be extractable," the experts said.

This does not deter Mr. Teves from pursuing the biodiesel business. Now that his jatropha project is underway, he said he is "in no hurry" to sell the seeds as a lot of local and foreign investors are interested in buying them.

RA 9367 has no provision mandating local biofuel producers to supply the local market first before exporting their products. This means biofuel producers can choose to supply their product to higher-paying foreigners.

In fact, Mr. Teves plans to sell to the more lucrative foreign market. "The PNOC (Philippine National Oil Co.) and the oil companies here want to already sign an agreement with me. But I'm not in a hurry because I know there are foreign companies willing to buy," he said.

He added that China and Japan are "very, very interested" to buy jatropha to produce biodiesel.

Minutes of the bicameral conference committee that fashioned the final version of the Biofuels Act reveal that Mr. Teves was apparently eyeing the foreign market even before the law was passed. In one of the rare moments that he spoke before the committee, he asked whether producers could sell abroad if local companies can't keep up with world prices.

"So it's not mandatory that a producer will have to sell to the local [market] if the price abroad will be higher?," he asked, to which then Senate Energy Committee Chair Aquilino Pimentel replied that there was no such provision in the proposed law.

Mr. Teves' statement of assets and liabilities show that he acquired his first agricultural land in Sibulan, Negros Oriental in 1950, and later became the managing director of Tolong Sugar Milling in Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental.

Today, his company, Herminio Teves and Co., which will finance his new jatropha processing plant, manages his sugar lands alongside rice and corn farms, piggeries, and subdivisions, mostly located in Tayawan, Sta. Catalina, and Bayawan. As of Dec. 31, 2006, while the then biofuels bill he co-authored was awaiting the President's approval, his sugar lands were collectively worth P11 million.

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April 7th, 2008, 11:11 AM

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## **And now P2B salt, corn scams?**

BY RANDY NOBLEZA

Malaya

<http://www.malaya.com.ph/apr07/news2.htm>

THE Federation of Free Farmers urged yesterday the government to investigate a P2 billion salt fertilization project and corn seed program of the Philippine Coconut Authority, saying these violated government rules on procurement.

"Only one supplier was allegedly allowed to submit a bid because all other interested bidders had earlier been disqualified by the PCA bidding committee," said FFF president Leonardo Montemayor.

The PCA mandate is concentrated on the strategic thrusts of farm productivity, product diversification, trade and market development for coconut farmers.

The FFF said the PCA reportedly allowed the bidding for the P1.89 billion salt supply project in December 2007 without a certification of availability of funds.

Montemayor, an agriculture secretary in 2001, said the PCA's estimated salt fertilization cost of P3,000 per hectare was "too big" and "likely overpriced."

He said he wrote the PCA board about the matter but has yet to a reply.

On the P100 million advanced by the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills Group to the PCA, the FFF said this was intended to mitigate the hunger of coconut farmers and their families who were affected by super-typhoons "Reming" and "Mileny" two years ago.

The CIIF Oil Mills Group, a private association of accredited oil mills all over the country, has been tapping several farmers' organizations to assist in the implementation of the program at the ground level.

"There have been disturbing reports that many corn seeds bought and distributed by the PCA were defective and did not grow properly," Montemayor said. "In other instances, the corn seeds were

distributed late and were not planted because there was no longer any rain."

The CIIF and FFF signed an agreement during the first quarter this year to establish coconut intercropping, coconut value-adding, and operation of agribusiness service kiosks to bring about countrywide development for the coconut industry.

April 7th, 2008, 09:46 PM

#283

3cr

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## Ethical lapses mark OK of biofuels law

By Jessica Hermosa and Johanna Sisante, VERA Files

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

(Conclusion)

PhilStar

<http://www.philstar.com/index.php?He...id=20080407111>

There is perhaps no lawmaker as enthusiastic about biofuels as Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri.

Zubiri was still congressman for the third district of Bukidnon when he became principal author of the House bill that eventually became Republic Act 9367 or the Biofuels Act. He campaigned hard to get other lawmakers to support the measure that he earned himself the nickname "Mr. Biofuel." His official page in the Senate website describes him as the "father of the Biofuels Act of 2006."

Zubiri's campaign for biofuels appears to be in keeping with his pro-environment image. Biofuels, made from such sources as sugarcane, coconut and jathropa, are after all supposed to be a cleaner alternative to fossil fuels. But Zubiri and his family - long-time sugar planters - also stand to gain from the budding biofuel industry that will depend mostly on sugarland for raw material.

Like Zubiri, 10 other authors of the Biofuels Act in the House of Representatives and the Senate and their families own agricultural lands that can or will provide feedstock for biofuel production. They include former congressman Herminio Teves and presidential brother-in-law Ignacio "Iggay" Arroyo.

Ethical lapses like these marked the passage of the Biofuels Act of 2006. Some of the lawmakers' vested interests prevented thorough discussions of the conversion of agricultural land to biofuel purposes, a move which will not only deprive farmers of land, but also cause more environmental damage in the long run.

Zubiri belongs to a family with a long-running history in the sugar business. His uncle George and father Jose Maria, the current governor of Bukidnon, hail from Negros Occidental, part of the country's "Sugar Bowl." The Zubiris are credited for bringing sugarcane to Bukidnon in the 1970s. The two were holding top positions at the Confederation of Sugar Producers Association (CSPA) at the time the younger Zubiri drafted the biofuels law.

Fernando Corpuz, manager of the Sugar Regulatory Administration's research development and extension for Luzon and Mindanao, said Zubiri's father "still has a lot of clout in it (sugar industry) being a political icon" even after he has sold their sugar mill to five Chinese traders.

Zubiri denied allegations of conflict of interest in the passage of the Biofuels Act. "I'm fighting for my district and for the constituency of all the sugar-producing areas," said the 38-year-old senator. "I'm fighting for the interests of the farmers: They are five million Filipinos. That's my job." These farmers have suffered from the lag in the sugar industry, which posted the largest decline among the agricultural industries at the end of 2007, partly due to low world prices for table sugar. The SRA then looked to bioethanol as an alternative market to revive the industry.

The Biofuels Act mandates the production of bioethanol from sugarcane, among other plant sources, and biodiesel from coconut and jathropa, effectively creating a bigger market for plantation owners. It also grants tax privileges to those who want to enter the biofuel industry.

It was Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, former secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), who raised the issue of conflict of interest in the passage of the Biofuels Act when she alleged in press releases that landlords had strongly lobbied for biofuels.

Santiago, head of the Senate Committee on Energy, said in a speech she delivered at the Energy Summit last January that legislators must immediately inform Congress of possible conflict of interest that may occur because of their proposed legislation. She cited the Anti-Graft Law that bans any lawmaker from authoring bills that may grant benefits to his or her business interests.

Feeling alluded to, Zubiri clarified that his family - the ruling political clan in Bukidnon that owns vast landholdings - has shifted from sugar to bananas. "I'm not producing sugar anymore. It's all bananas now," he said.

Eil Branzuela, provincial agrarian reform officer for South Bukidnon, said, however, the senator's father still has a connection with the Bukidnon Sugar Milling Co. (BUSCO), which the family used to own, because of his position as Bukidnon governor.

The young senator was quoted in media as having said that BUSCO would tie up with Bronzeoak Philippines to construct an ethanol plant in Bukidnon. Documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission show that an ethanol plant called South Bukidnon Bioenergy was registered in November 2006. The chair of the board is Jose Ma. Zabaleta Jr., whose father Jose Ma. Zabaleta is president of Bronzeoak Philippines and a friend of the Zubiri family. The senior Zabaleta was the executive director of the Philippine Sugar Millers Association at the time of RA 9367's passage.

Governor Zubiri is also the president of the CSPA, a position he has held since Sept. 1, 2006, according to SEC documents and a statement from the senator himself. SEC documents also reveal that his uncle George was the senior vice president of the confederation from Sept. 1, 2004 to Aug. 31, 2006.

The confederation, which declares its aims as developing and securing the stability of the sugar industry, has 31 associations composed of 4,000 to 5,000 members each. It is said to produce more than half the country's sugar supply.

In addition to being in the position to supply most of the sugar needed for ethanol production, the implementing rules and regulations of the Biofuels Act made the confederation a member of the Bioethanol Board, a consultative body that will work with the SRA in developing and implementing bioethanol-related policies.

Senator Zubiri, however, insists that he and his family are out of the sugar business. "I personally do not own more than 10 hectares titled to me, and same with the rest of my family, because we were already subjected to agrarian reform in 1988," he said.

Declarations of real property acquired from the Bukidnon provincial assessor's office reveal otherwise. They show that along with various members of the Zubiri family who separately own portions of sugarcane land, the senator himself has eight hectares in Maramag, Bukidnon dedicated to sugar crops. These sugar lands are what the Zubiris retained from their vast landholdings, Valle Escondida in particular, after being subjected to the agrarian reform program in the late 1980s.

Asked why his father is the CSPA president, the senator admitted that his father still owns about 30 hectares of land planted to sugar "so he can be part of the confederation."

"My father is (producing sugar), but he's not a senator. He's not a congressman. Under the law, the violation is only the legislator," he said.

Joel Villanueva, agrarian reform officer of Maramag, said that a total of 610 hectares of the Zubiris' Valle Escondida were transferred to 281 farmer-beneficiaries.

Branzuela said certificates of land ownership have been given to the farmer-beneficiaries, but the Zubiris still operate on the land through a leaseback agreement. The Zubiris, in turn, are leasing this land to food packaging giant Dole, he said.

Zubiri did not deny this. "The beneficiaries still own the land. We pay them every year for the use of the land even if it's ours in the first place," he said.

Gil de los Reyes, agrarian reform lawyer and former DAR undersecretary, said it is unclear how a leaseback agreement can be fairly made as "there are no clear rules" on the terms of such a transaction.

Explaining the House deliberations on the biofuels bill, Zubiri said that aside from industry players and government agencies, he had consulted with Greenpeace, Haribon and the Clean Cities Movement. "They were all consulted when we passed this, especially the groups that pushed for cleaner air," he said.

Transcripts of the House meetings and sessions, however, show that these groups were never given the floor during the deliberations. Neither were farmers' groups. As much as the lawmakers mentioned the sugar boom's benefits to farmers in terms of employment, nothing in the House transcripts pointed to a discussion of how exactly profits would trickle down to grassroots farmers. These discussions came up only in the Senate and during the bicameral conference committee meetings.

### **Development for whom?**

There is much to be gained from biofuels, although that can be interpreted in two ways. On one hand, there are gains to the public – cleaner air, lower oil prices and higher employment rates. On the other hand, there are the more sinister gains the lawmakers have carved out for themselves – generous profits to be made from the boom in feedstock plantations.

Antonio Flores, national treasurer of the farmer's group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, is careful to make a distinction between these two benefits. He said: "Hindi naman kami tutol sa usaping development. Pero, ang tanong namin, para kanino ang development (We aren't against development. But our question is, for whom is this development)?"

There are other looming issues that are not sufficiently discussed by the Biofuels Act and its IRR. These include complications with land use, continuing environmental harm, and an even more problematic imports situation.

The law is not specific about land use conversion. This is possibly the trickiest aspect of the law, as it touches on land reform and the food versus fuel debate that was emphasized in media early this year.

Corpus of SRA expressed misgivings about the dearth of policies on land use. The SRA is tasked to check the suitability of lands for feedstock plantation before a potential planter ventures into planting vast tracts of sugar crops.

National Biofuels Board (NBB) Deputy Director John Jacob Gonzales enumerated these as "no competition for food, no competition for land. Biofuels should be planted on green fields or marginalized land. Conventional land for food crops like rice and others should (not) be in direct competition."

He did not say how his board plans to prevent or discourage landowners from converting food crops to feedstock plantations – to the displeasure of farmers like KMP's Flores.

"Ang posisyon namin diyan ay yung lupa sana ay para taniman ng pagkain tulad ng mais (Our position is that the land be used to plant food like corn)," he said.

Aside from ensuring that there will be no competition with food, the NBB guidelines also prohibit feedstock land use that will harm the environment.

Surprisingly, the law does not include the Department of Environment and Natural Resources among the members of the NBB despite the reported ecological harm associated with feedstock growing.

Clearing forests to make way for feedstock plantation has caught the attention of environmental groups all over the world. Biofuel production in Indonesia, for instance, is currently under scrutiny by governments and NGOs worldwide.

Conversion of forests and grasslands into palm oil plantations is said to be emitting more carbon than gasoline usage. These conversions release 17 to 423 times more carbon than the amount reduced by biofuel use, revealed a February 2008 study by the University of Minnesota and the Nature Conservancy titled "The Dark Side of Biofuels."

Despite an alleged surplus in feedstock, especially in the case of sugarcane, the Philippines is expected to fall short of the target supply needed to comply with the mandated blends. One reason is that there aren't enough processing plants.

"For biodiesel I think we have enough supply," Gonzales said. "But for bioethanol, we need to set up at least 10 more factories, and each factory needs 30 million liters. One factory alone needs at least one

year and a half (to construct)."

Gonzales said the government will have to import bioethanol to reverse the deficit.

Deliberations in the Senate and the bicameral conference committee had anticipated the possibility of ethanol importation in the next few years. The Biofuels Act allows importation when there is a local shortage.

With a looming importation problem, potential environmental harm and muddled land use regulations, the Biofuels Act may be creating more problems than solutions at a time when the country direly needs a sustainable and effective alternative energy program.

VERA Files is put out by veteran journalists taking a deeper look into current issues. Vera is Latin for "true."



April 8th, 2008, 03:08 AM

#284

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sine nobilitate



Join Date: Jun 2007  
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## **Dismissal of NAIA-3 graft case vs ex-transpo chief appealed**

By Jocelyn Uy  
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#)  
First Posted 22:55:00 04/07/2008

MANILA, Philippines--Government prosecutors have urged the Sandiganbayan to reconsider its decision clearing former transportation secretary Vicente Rivera Jr. for alleged violation of the anti-graft law in connection with a contract for the mothballed construction of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

In a 35-page motion for reconsideration, the Office of the Special Prosecutor insisted it presented sufficient evidence proving that the terms and conditions of the amended and restated concession agreement (ARCA) in 1996 were grossly disadvantageous to the government.

In its March 18 ruling, the anti-graft court's Fifth Division said Rivera should be spared further trial because the prosecution failed to set the standards for what could be considered "reasonable" conditions of the agreement.

With the NAIA-3 contract already voided by the Supreme Court, the Sandiganbayan ruled that the absence of a valid contract, made it unnecessary to discuss whether or not it was manifestly disadvantageous to the government.

The prosecution pointed out that Rivera's contract with the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco), provided that the government assume Piatco's liabilities in the event the consortium failed to meet its loan obligations. This was tantamount to a direct government guarantee, which the Build-Operate-Transfer Law prohibited, it said.

In seeking reconsideration of the ruling, it added that setting the standards for the terms and conditions of the agreement would have the effect of giving the prosecution "the burden of legislating the definition of what is gross and manifest."

"Such burden lies solely with the legislature... it is the sole duty of the prosecution to prove to this court that the contract entered into by [Rivera] is manifestly and grossly disadvantageous," the prosecution added.

It also said that it was the duty of the anti-graft court to make a finding of gross and manifest disadvantage based on the facts it presented.

The contract for the NAIA Terminal 3 was voided by the Supreme Court in 2004. A Pasay court gave government the go-signal to take over the terminal but ordered it to repay the contractors for work already done.

Meanwhile, the terminal has yet to operate because further repairs are needed.



April 9th, 2008, 09:23 AM

#285

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## **Missing swine funds went to admin '07 Senate bets**

04/09/2008  
GMA News  
<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88416/La...07-Senate-bets>

MANILA, Philippines - At least P600 million of the multibillion-peso missing funds from the government's swine program funded the senatorial bids of seven administration bets in 2007, a lawyer said Wednesday.

In an interview on dzBB radio, lawyer Harry Roque Jr said information he obtained from an informant in the Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) indicate that some P600 million in unaccounted funds went to administration bets' election kitty.

Quedancor was tapped to manage the swine program.

"Ang sabi ng impormante, and isa nakakuha ng P300 million, isa nakakuha ng P200 million at ang lima, P100 million ang nakuha galing sa kaban ng Quedancor (An informant said one got P300 million, one got P200 million and five got P100 million all from Quedancor)," Roque said without disclosing the identity of his informant.

"Nakikiusap ako sa natalo, sa mga P100 million lang ang nakuha. May nabigyan ng P300 million. Tanungin ninyo bakit P100 million lang ang nabigay sa inyo (I'd like to ask the losers why they got only P100 million, why don't they ask for an accounting when one of their teammates got P300 million)," he added.

Roque refused to name the candidates who received the respective amounts. When pressed to name who got how much, he would only say, "may nanalo, may natalo (some won, some lost)."

Those who ran and won under the administration's "Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) Unity" slate are Senators Joker Arroyo, Edgardo [Angara](#), and Juan Miguel Zubiri.

Those who were defeated included Ralph Recto, Prospero Pichay Jr, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Vicente Sotto III, Cesar Montano, Luis Singson, Michael Defensor, Sultan Jamalul Kiram III, and Vicente Magsaysay.

Last Tuesday, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson called for a Senate investigation into alleged multi-billion scam and sought to find the status of the funds that went to the program amid claims that they ended up in the administration's campaign kitty.

In the same interview, Roque noted that of the P2.25 billion funding for Quedancor's swine program, the Commission on Audit (COA) could only account for P1.66 billion.

"Sabi ng informant, ang balance binuhos sa candidacy ng tumakbo sa admin (My informant said the balance went to the candidacy of those who ran under the administration banner)," Roque said.

Roque theorized the amount could have slipped past a ban on disbursing funds during the campaign period by having Quedancor making it appear the money came from its loans to farmers sourced from the Land Bank.

As of posting time, GMANews.TV is trying to reach administration senatorial bets for comments.

However, former campaign staffs of administration senatorial bets Ralph Recto and Luis Singson said they have no knowledge of the funds as they only handle the itinerary of the candidates.

In a telephone interview, Singson's staff Roselle Go said that all she knew is that every candidate has his own campaign funds but she was not aware where it came from.

In a separate phone interview, Elsie Jesalva of Team Recto said she handled only the campaign schedule of the former senator.

April 9th, 2008, 09:26 AM

#286

[3cr](#)

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005

Location: San Andreas Fault

Posts: 7,240

Likes (Received): 243

## **Taxpayers to end up paying for Quedancor's P1.3-B debt**

04/08/2008

GMA News

<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88333/Ta...ors-P13-B-debt>

MANILA, Philippines - In the end, it is the taxpayers who will end up paying the P1.3-B loan Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp (Quedancor) incurred in its failed P4.26-billion swine program.

In GMA's 24 Oras, reporter Maki Pulido reported that according to Danilo Reyes, Accounting and Strategic Management professor in Miriam College, with Quedancor hard-pressed to cough up fund to pay its 4-year old debt, it is likely that the government will end up shouldering the bill.

"The government has to provide the money to be able to pay Landbank for the debt, because if Landbank is not paid for this, then you bankrupt a bank," Reyes said.

The television report said P1.3 billion was part of the P2.4 billion debt by Quedancor.

Quedancor launched a swine program in 2003 to assist farmers venturing into hog-raising. Some P5 billion in funds went to the project, with P3 billion coming from the Land Bank of the Philippines and P2 billion from Equitable-PCI Bank, and government bonds issued as collateral.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) echoed Reyes' statement, saying Quedancor's debt will be an additional burden to the Filipino taxpayer.

"In both direct form of taxation and in indirect form of taxation, all these taxes, they will end up one way or another as payment for debts," said Emman Hizon, FDC's debt and public finance campaigner.

Quedancor, for their part, said they have been paying their debts since 2004, which they said was the reason why the figure was trimmed down to P1.3 billion from P2.4 billion.

"When we assumed office we intensified our efforts of collection. We were able to reduce (our debt) to P1.3 billion," Agriculture undersecretary Bernie Fonddevilla said.

The Senate had already expressed its intention to probe the alleged swine scam, with opposition Senator Panfilo Lacson filing Senate Resolution 340, which sought to find the status of the funds that went to the program amid claims that they ended up in the administration's campaign kitty.

"It seems that multi-billion anomalies are becoming the hallmark of this administration to the detriment of our people... Like the fertilizer scam, there are allegations that the fund for the swine program were diverted to the 2004 campaign fund of the administration to ensure the re-election bid of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo," Lacson said in the resolution.

Lacson also noted that in July 2004, Malacañang transferred Quedancor from the Department of Agriculture to the Office of the President.

Malacañang, on the other hand, has tossed to Quedancor the task of explaining to the public the reported irregularities in the P4.26-billion swine program.

"In the spirit of transparency yan ang dapat sagutin ng Quedancor, the primary agency (In the spirit of transparency, it is Quedancor that must explain, because it was the primary agency involved)," Cerge Remonde, head of the Presidential Management Staff, said.

[3cr](#)

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005

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Posts: 7,240

Likes (Received): 243

## Lacson wants Senate probe on alleged swine scam

04/08/2008

GMA News

<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88234/La...ged-swine-scam>

MANILA, Philippines - Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson filed on Tuesday a resolution seeking a Senate investigation into alleged multi-billion scam in the government's swine program involving the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor).

Lacson filed Senate Resolution 340, which sought to find the status of the funds that went to the program amid claims that they ended up in the administration's campaign kitty.

"It seems that multi-billion anomalies are becoming the hallmark of this administration to the detriment of our people... Like the fertilizer scam, there are allegations that the fund for the swine program were diverted to the 2004 campaign fund of the administration to ensure the re-election bid of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo," Lacson said in the resolution.

Lacson also noted the scam brought "memories" of a P1.3-billion textbook scam, where the bidding process was "tailor-fit" for a select group of favored bidders with interlocking sets of officers.

"There seems to be a disturbing and irrational pattern in the issuance by the president of EOs (Executive Orders) reorganizing a particular agency of the government by transferring it from department to another particularly if the said agency is seen as a means where public funds could be diverted to another use to the detriment of the intended beneficiaries in particular and public interest in general," Lacson said.

Quedancor launched a swine program in 2003 to assist farmers venturing into hog-raising. Some P5 billion in funds went to the project, with P3 billion coming from the Land Bank of the Philippines and P2 billion from Equitable-PCI Bank, and government bonds issued as collateral.

But the Commission on Audit's (COA) 2005 Report found that the program had P755.62 million in outstanding loan balance and P663.77 million in receivables.

The COA findings also said the procurement of input supplies for Quedancor swine program amounting to P1.67 billion during the year was not in accordance with government procurement procedures, and the high cost of credit was not beneficial to farmer beneficiaries.

COA also said some borrowers denied borrowing from Quedancor, and that the team leader or input suppliers sought their signatures in exchange for amounts ranging from P200 to P300.

The COA report also showed that the management did not provide equal opportunity to contractors, leading to the reign of select input suppliers that have notably interlocking sets of officers.

Records of the COA showed that a certain Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director of Metro Livestock Inc., is also a member of the Board of Directors of the BIRKS Agri-Livestock Corporation and a partner of the New Gold Agri-Vet Company.

His name and that of a director of BIRKS Corporation, also appear as former directors of the Silver Rock Resources Corporation.

Yet as of Dec. 31, 2005, Quedancor procured some P1.67 billion worth of input supplies under the swine program. Of this amount, BIRKS, SRC and Metro Livestock got the biggest share of 35%, 29% and 23% respectively. Along with New Gold Rock, the four input suppliers acquired 87.53% or P1.46 billion of the total procurements.

Tabulation from the regional office also showed that procurement was concentrated from the three Input Suppliers in the following regions: Silver Stock in Regions I and III; BIRKS in Regions VI, VII and VIII and Metro Livestock in Regions IV, VI and NCR.

Records showed that the major suppliers were given huge amounts of purchase orders despite their minimal paid up capital which amounted to only P1 million authorized capital stock each.

"No track record was required from the Input Suppliers per QSP accreditation process. Even newly organized suppliers were able to participate in the program," Lacson said.

He added verification showed Quedancor accredited input suppliers who were not among those accredited by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) under its Swine Breeder Farm Accreditation Program (SBFAP).

Lacson noted Malacañang in July 2004 transferred Quedancor from the Department of Agriculture to the Office of the President.

"Considering the said findings, the COA stated that the recoverability of said outstanding loans is deemed remote and that there is a likelihood that the government will lose from the said program," Lacson said.

[3cr](#)

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005

Location: San Andreas Fault  
Posts: 7,240

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## Injustice: The root cause of corruption

INSIDE CEBU By Bobit S. Avila

Wednesday, April 9, 2008

PhilStar

<http://www.philstar.com/index.php?Na...aid=2008040851>

Last April 3rd Thursday, our fellow Star columnist Federico D. Pascual, Jr. wrote in his column Postscript a very explosive article about the National Power Corp. (Napocor) entitled "NAPOCOR GIVES P956-M CONTRACT TO P62,500 FIRM." What caught my eye was that this firm just happened to be based in Cebu! As we gathered from that article (which he originally wrote in his Mar. 27th column) Napocor awarded a contract to this firm known as PT Marsitero Marloan Prakasrsa/Transpacific Consolidated Resources, Inc. (TCRI) for a coal supply that was grossly out of proportion to its financial capability. Shades of Cris Saavedra's company?

When I checked my own sources on this story, we ended in a blank wall. Hence I still have to get some info as to whether this company existed in Cebu? Perhaps this is because that company doesn't have an office in Cebu, but at the business center in Danara Hotel Quezon City or elsewhere?

As Pascual wrote, "Worse, a check with the hotel showed that the business center misrepresented as the TCRI address was no longer operating two months before its address was used. How were the important papers sent and delivered? In the notice of award, TCRI had a new address Room 2405, Atlanta Center in Annapolis, Greenhills, San Juan. Like a nomad, TCRI changes addresses often - from Danao City in Cebu, to the Danara Hotel in Quezon City, to Atlanta Center in San Juan in just three months!"

For sure, the depository bank that TCRI used called Peninsula Rural Bank is as obscure as the company dealing with it. Pascual mentions a certain Wilfredo Tuadles as the only incorporator that submitted his community tax or cedula in registering this company.

Indeed, Pascual has stumbled on another government corporation allegedly mired in graft and corruption and I submit that none of the local Cebu based newspapers got this story. For sure this is a mere tip of the iceberg as far as Napocor is concerned. This is one government corporation that is zero on transparency. More than a decade ago, I stumbled into a mess in Napocor about their buying a crankshaft for a diesel engine as a spare. One would think that this was a very positive move by Napocor.

However after years of storage one of its diesel engines needed a new crankshaft and it was time to use the brand new spare. But when it was installed, the diesel engine shook violently and it was learned that the crankshaft was already misaligned. It turned out, a huge machined part like that had a stringent maintenance schedule that wasn't followed. So the part which Napocor procured at P7 million was plain junk and a new one had to be purchased for P12 million. So the question is, was anyone fired or held responsible or accountable for this faux pas? Nope, the biggest loser is the taxpayer, while the incompetent employees still got their usual pay.

How many government agencies are there engaged in similar corrupt practices? I'm sure we don't have enough columnists like Mr. Pascual or reporters to look into scams like this. But should we pin the blame on the crooks-disguised-as-government-bureaucrats? Actually the blame is squarely on the foot of our snail paced justice system. If the Office of the Ombudsman did their job well, when Mr. Pascual exposed this story last Mar. 27th, they should have swooped down at the Napocor offices and did their due diligence and handcuffed the guilty parties.

I guess this is why Cebuanos did not come out to listen to the talk of whistleblower Eng. Rodolfo Lozada Jr. when he came to Cebu during Holy Week because we already know that it was useless to listen to him talking again about the ZTE-NBN scam which was a case of an attempted bribery, when Cebu has its own celebrated corruption cases like the infamous Lamppost scam or the Girls Scout scam of then Rep. Clavel Asas Martinez where government funds was allegedly deposited in her personal bank account. Today the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas merely washes their hands on these cases, passing the buck to Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

Because the Ombudsman is inutile in catching crooks in government service, we are now seeing corruption at a grand scale. So no one gets surprised when the Philippines is tagged as one of the most corrupt countries that it is because when a corrupt government official knows that justice is slow to react even when these rats are exposed in columns then they have become callus to even such exposes'. Again I'd like to reiterate to our readers that the root cause of our problems regarding corruption is plain and simple injustice or lack of justice. Give us an Ombudsman that can decide whom to indict in a month and believe me, corruption will slowly diminish.

April 10th, 2008, 04:00 AM

#289

3cr

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005  
Location: San Andreas Fault  
Posts: 7,240  
Likes (Received): 243

## **Imelda promises no more poor Pinoys in 2 years, if....**

Daily Tribune  
<http://www.tribune.net.ph/headlines/20080410hed2.html>

There will be no more poor Filipinos by 2011, former First Lady Imelda Marcos said yesterday, but that statement carries with it an Imelda condition.

A bright future beckons the poor Filipino people, despite the controversies and problems hounding the administration of President Arroyo, as the con-troversial Mrs. Marcos pledged "to give all the earthly desires" of the poor Filipino as willed by the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

As the economic woes of the Philippines continue to accumulate, with a worsening rice shortage and very high prices, the former First Lady who in the past was tagged as the "steel butterfly" said she is more than willing to help all poor Filipinos, but with one condition: That the Marcoses will not be tagged as thieves.

Fernando "Ding" Diaz, spokesperson for the flamboyant Mrs. Marcos, confirmed earlier reports that Mrs. Marcos has planned for two years for her to rid the country of poor people by way of a foundation created by her late husband.

"Yes, all of those promises are true," Diaz told the Tribune which asked for the verification of the report.

Mrs. Marcos was quoted as saying that she was ready to again take on the role of "mother" of the Filipino people via the so-called "Marcos Foundation for Truth, Justice and Peace."

The Marcos foundation's main goal is claimed to implement her husband's last will "to give all his earthly riches to the Filipino people."

"No Filipino poor in two years. Give me two years, I will complete this promise," she said.

There is a catch though.

Mrs. Marcos said that in order to facilitate or to start generating funds from the generosity of her late husband, people should first know and accept that they did not steal their accumulated wealth.

She asked media to play their role in conveying this piece of news to the people.

"To do that (give away earthly riches to the poor), you in the media have to help me tell the truth about

the Marcos wealth. The Marcoses are not thieves. That is what should be corrected," she said.

Mrs. Marcos, showed media boxes of documents that she described as just "a portion of the proofs" that the Marcoses "did not steal from the Filipino people."

"In one account alone, we have 18,000 tons of gold," she said.

Mrs. Marcos claims that the documents she holds on the gold bullions show the real ownership of the gold, which is Marcos, that she says is still being held by the United States Government.

The documents, she earlier said, show that Marcos, then a lawyer for a gold firm, was given his payment in gold bars by the firm for his legal services, all of which started long before he became president.

Her lawyer, Oliver Lozano who earlier filed a petition before a Manila Regional Trial Court seeking to nullify Executive Order 1 of then President Corazon Aquino, said that if the funds are put into proper use, it could not only benefit farmers who are deep in poverty, but also human rights victims under all administrations, rural and urban poor, veterans, soldiers, police and military, senior citizens, students and all others.

Mrs. Marcos is facing numerous charges before the Sandiganbayan over allegations of massive graft and corruption during the reign of her late husband. A number of criminal cases lodged against her however, have already been dismissed by the anti-graft court.

The Marcos Family has been accused of amassing some \$10 billion in 1986, which the then Corazon Aquino government claimed was ill-gotten.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government, the "child" of EO 1 which the camp of Mrs. Marcos wants scrapped, has been breathing down their necks under a mandate to recover the alleged ill-gotten wealth.

Mrs. Marcos had strongly denied her family's role in any stolen any money or assets from government coffers.

April 10th, 2008, 04:53 AM

#290

3cr

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005

Location: San Andreas Fault

Posts: 7,240

Likes (Received): 243

## **Big-time Napocor contract for small-time firm**

By Conrado R. Banal III  
Philippine Daily Inquirer  
Inquirer  
<http://business.inquire.net/money/c...mall-time-firm>

About a month ago ("Coal center," Breaktime, March 6, 2008), our beloved National Power Corp., or Napocor, invited bidders for coal supplies for four of its power plants.

Whadayano—Napocor just awarded a P960-million contract to a 3-month-old company without any clear track record in coal supply.

The company, called Transpacific Consolidated Resources Inc., or TCRI, just cornered the second biggest contract in Napocor's coal procurement.

TCRI registered itself as a corporation only last Oct. 25. Luckily for the company, Napocor invited it to bid for a coal supply contract worth P320 million.

Please, that's not a typo. The original invitation was just for P320 million. Without much ado, Napocor simply increased the contract to P960 million. Okay, that was P956,374,204.50 to be exact.

Still, it just so happened that TCRI was the lucky winner. Very lucky winner!

And it was TCRI who? Well, it seems that the company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) office in Cebu.

Again—it was not in Metro Manila, where the company was supposed to have an office, since Metro Manila was where it was about to do business with Napocor.

That's not all, folks, because TCRI actually had a paid-up capital of only P62,500 exactly.

I have a silly question to Napocor: How could TCRI pay for the performance security, which is 10 percent of the total contract price, or about P96 million?

Boss, I am not a math wizard, but the paid-up capital of TCRI was not even one percent of the P320-million original contract, much less the P960-million actual deal.

Yet, Napocor invited TCRI to bid. Nobody is surprised that TCRI also won.

The incorporators of TCRI were Leslie Ducut, Ressie Ducut, Lilia Yolanda Tuadles, Wilfredo Tuadles and Lorna Arceo.

None of them is known in the power sector as a coal supplier.

When TCRI got the Napocor invitation to bid, moreover, TCRI listed its address at the business center of Danara Hotel in Quezon City.

Look at that—the company was bidding for a P320-million contract, and yet it used the business center of a little known hotel as its address. Wow!

Plus, TCRI has this propensity for changing its address, originally listed in its incorporation as Danao City in Cebu, the business center in Danara Hotel in Quezon City, and finally, after it got the award from Napocor, to the Atlanta Center in San Juan City.

Its restlessness as a business, apparently, did not make Napocor think twice before inviting it to the bidding and, ultimately, awarding an even bigger contract to it.

Bear in mind that Napocor officials are still facing graft charges at the Office of the Ombudsman for the alleged overpricing of coal suppliers last year.

No wonder, we still have the second highest power rate in the whole of Asia.

April 10th, 2008, 05:23 AM

#291

3cr

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005  
Location: San Andreas Fault  
Posts: 7,240  
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## Stop to loan payments for medical incinerators urged

By Beverly T. Natividad  
Philippine Daily Inquirer  
<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakin...nerators-urged>

MANILA, Philippines -- Why pay for something Filipinos cannot use when the same money can be used to pay for local health services?

This is the question raised by civil society groups to the government as they sought the reallocation of loan payments for questionable debts to fund basic social services like health care.

In a press conference on Tuesday, Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) and Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) questioned the government's continuing loan payments for some 26 unused medical waste incinerators from Austria.

The P503-million loan was used by the Philippine government to buy 26 incinerators from Austria in 1997.

The medical waste incinerators eventually became useless equipment following the ban on medical incinerators with the passing of the Philippine Clean Air Act in 1999.

The two groups have classified the loan as an illegitimate debt since the Austrian incinerators were exempted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) from its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

HCWH added that the circumstances surrounding the loan was also dubious. For example, the Philippine government undertook a P503-million loan from Bank Austria to bankroll 26 incinerators from Austrian manufacturer VAMED.

Ten percent of VAMED's shares, however, are owned by Bank Austria, which shows a clear conflict of interest.

The HCWH also called the loan as a "toxic debt" because the incinerators were bought without the proper checks on its toxic emissions and hazardous ash residues.

For example, the group said, when VAMED conducted an emission test on one of its incinerators at the East Avenue Medical Center, the carbon monoxide level was found to be at 88 mg/m<sup>3</sup> (milligram per cubic meter), exceeding VAMED's own upper limit at 50 mg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the anomalous circumstances under which the loan was undertaken, and for a project that eventually became useless, local taxpayers will carry the burden of the loan for another six years, according to the HCWH and FDC.

"For the harmful and useless incinerators, we now have to pay roughly \$2 million in principal amortization and interest payments until 2014," said Ronnel Lim, program officer of HCWH.

Lim said instead of allocating money for interest payments of such useless projects, the government should realign the money to the delivery of social services, particularly in health care.

April 10th, 2008, 05:35 AM

#292

3cr

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005  
Location: San Andreas Fault  
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## Administration senatorial bets hit in swine scandal

GMA News  
<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88574/Ad...swine-scandal>

MANILA, Philippines - Around P600 million of the P2.46-billion swine program of the government went to the campaign funds of seven senatorial candidates of the administration last year, a civil society lawyer and government critic said Wednesday.

In a radio interview, Herminio Harry L. Roque, Jr. claimed a source from Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. — the group tasked to manage the swine program — told him that one candidate got P300 million, another bagged P200 million while the rest got P100 million.

Mr. Roque declined to name the candidates. The allies of the administration ran under the Team Unity ticket during the May 2007 midterm polls.

"I urge those who got P100 million to ask why you obtained such amount while one of their allies got P300 million," he said.

Team Unity consisted of former senator Ralph G. Recto, former Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero B. Pichay, Jr., former senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta, former senator Vicente Sotto III, actor Cesar Montano, former Ilocos Sur governor Luis Singson, Senators Joker P. Arroyo, Edgardo J. Angara, Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, former Presidential chief-of-staff Michael T. Defensor, Sultan Jamalul Kiram III, and former Zambales governor Vicente Magsaysay.

Only Messrs. Angara, Zubiri and Arroyo won the election.

The swine program was intended to help hog raisers boost their output by providing them access to loans.

Mr. Roque earlier said the government may have diverted around P900 million out of its P2.46-billion fund to finance the campaigns of its allies during the 2004 polls.

He cited a Commission on Audit report that noted P700 million in unrecorded receivables in 2004, and P1.6

billion in 2005.

Malacañang, however, dismissed the allegation as a mere rumor.

"Such information could not stand in court. Evidence is needed in order to know if there are basis in these hearsay. Otherwise, these issues will time and again be considered as rumors," said Deputy Presidential Spokesman Anthony T. Golez, Jr.

Meanwhile, Team Unity senatorial winners in the 2007 midterm elections denied having benefited from the alleged swine scandal.

"What a joke. I won't even dignify him an answer," neophyte Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri said when asked of his reaction to Mr. Roque's allegation that at least P600 million funded their ticket.

Mr. Zubiri's legal counsel George Erwin F. Garcia said in a text message, "If that is true, we could not have experienced financial difficulties in the poll protest [filed against us]."

Genuine Opposition losing senatorial candidate Aquilino D. L. Pimentel III filed an election protest against Mr. Zubiri for alleged fraud. "Mr. Zubiri is using his hard-earned personal savings," he claimed.

Mr. Angara's chief of staff, Nina Pangandaman, also denied the allegation, claiming ignorance of the swine program. She said Mr. Angara, who is abroad, has yet to release a statement on the allegations.

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## Singson denies receiving funds from Quedancor

GMA News

<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88630/Si...from-Quedancor>

MANILA, Philippines - Former Ilocos Sur governor Luis "Chavit" Singson on Thursday denied that he received any money from Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) for his failed May 2007 senatorial bid.

"Sa awa ng Diyos wala akong natanggap kahit isang pera. Wala kaming nakukuha sa Quedancor (I have not received any money from Quedancor)," Singson said in an interview on radio dzBB.

Singson added he had no knowledge on the allegations of lawyer Harry Roque that administration senatorial bets were given Quedancor funds for their campaign kitty.

"Yan ang hindi ko alam. Hindi ako 'yun. Wala ako dun, (That I don't know. I am not one of them)," he said.

Singson ran under the administration's "Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) Unity" but lost.

The other defeated administration bets were Ralph Recto, Prospero Pichay Jr, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Vicente Sotto III, Cesar Montano, Michael Defensor, Sultan Jamalul Kiram III, and Vicente Magsaysay.

Senators Joker Arroyo, Edgardo Angara, and Juan Miguel Zubiri were the Team Unity candidates who won.

On Wednesday, Roque said information he obtained from an informant in Quedancor indicated that some P600 million in unaccounted funds went to administration bets' election kitty.

Quedancor was tapped to manage the swine program.

"Ang sabi ng impormante, and isa nakakuha ng P300 million, isa nakakuha ng P200 million at ang lima, P100 million ang nakuha galing sa kaban ng Quedancor (An informant said one got P300 million, one got P200 million and five got P100 million all from Quedancor)," Roque said without disclosing the identity of his informant.

"Nakikiusap ako sa natalo, sa mga P100 million lang ang nakuha. May nabigyan ng P300 million. Tanungin ninyo bakit P100 million lang ang nabigay sa inyo (I'd like to ask the losers why they got only P100 million, why don't they ask for an accounting when one of their teammates got P300 million)," he added.

Roque refused to name the candidates who received the respective amounts. When pressed to name who got how much, he would only say, "may nanalo, may natalo (some won, some lost)."

*Last edited by 3cr; April 10th, 2008 at 05:41 AM.*

April 10th, 2008, 05:53 AM

#293

3cr

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005

Location: San Andreas Fault

Posts: 7,240

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**Dang! Meron na rin Dictionary of Pinoy Corruption Word/Terms... Only in Pinas... Tsk, tsk, tsk...** 🙄🙄🙄

## Dictionary on RP-style corruption hits the shelves

GMA News

<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/88122/Di...ts-the-shelves>

MANILA, Philippines - Wondering what to shell out in case someone asked for a "gobyas"? Puzzled about "gapangan" the government? Or perhaps just curious why "pangangahoy" should be completely abolished?

Well, wonder no more, as Corruptionary, a specialized dictionary of about 400 endemic Pinoy corruption lingo, has finally hit bookshelves Monday.

For two years, the Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG) compiled terms and jargons common to corrupt public officials and make them more understandable to majority of Filipinos.

Like any other dictionary, Corruptionary has the words' pronunciation, etymology, and use.

So one must be ready to dole out money if, say, a policeman asked for "gobyas"; expose illegal operations

or "gapangan" in the government; and be sure not to ride cars with stolen parts of government-issued vehicle and other equipments gathered from discreet "pangangahoy."

CenPEG and several student researchers from the University of the Philippines gathered the corruption-related terms from various sources, which are mostly government agencies, police and the National Bureau of Investigation, courts, businessmen, and the media.

The advocacy group got the green light to publish the special dictionary from no less than its Board chairman National Artist for Literature, Dr Bienvenido Lumbera.

"If the terminologies used by 'corruptors' become more known to people, then it's easier to expose corruption," said Bonifacio Ilagan, the dictionary's editor.

For Ilagan, corruption in the Philippines has become a sub-culture, deserving to have its own academic textbook for others to learn.

Senate whistleblower Rodolfo 'Jun' Lozada Jr, who also contributed a few words in the dictionary, can't help but laugh about the whole thing.

"Honestly, I found it funny. Imagine, corruption now has a dictionary!" he said.

Among Lozada's contributions to the compilation were "bubukol" and "moderate their greed," which he uttered during the Senate investigation on the \$329.48-million ZTE mess.

"I think it's not only money that gets stolen in corruption but more so the hopes of the people, the hopes of the country," Lozada said during the book's launch.



April 10th, 2008, 07:46 AM

#294

[zeejay](#)  
reader



Join Date: Jan 2007  
Posts: 90  
Likes (Received): 0

As I said in the other thread, the Corruptionary floats in the news nowadays probably because the turnout of the sales was very low. Probably no one even bought it. Hehe. It will just be a waste of money.

As for the swine program of the DA, apparently Quedancor loaned money to hog raisers or owners of piggeries in need of financial assistance. The recipients of the loans were not able to repay because business was not fruitful. Swine owners admitted they experienced losses. So if that was the case, how can they repay? The funds are duly accounted for. Remember Quedancor is a creditor.

**Dolce Vita!**



April 10th, 2008, 01:56 PM

#295

[Fundador](#)  
Registered User



Join Date: Oct 2007  
Location: Iloilo City  
Posts: 465  
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## Anti-corruption groups meet to plot moves

BY AMITA LEGASPI, GMANews.TV

MANILA, Philippines - Amid the increasing number of unresolved anomalies in the government, business groups, civil society organizations and social action centers of the Catholic Church are planning to step up efforts to fight corruption.

Vince Lazatin, executive director of Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN), told GMANews.TV they, together with the other members of Coalition Against Corruption, will be closely monitoring corruption cases filed in courts.

Among those to be included in the monitoring list are the cases of former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez on alleged bribery and former Agriculture undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante on fertilizer scam.

Perez has been accused of receiving a \$2-million fund in exchange for the approval of a power deal with Argentine company Impsa, a deal approved by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

On the other hand, Bolante has been linked to the allegedly irregular disbursement of the P728-million fertilizer fund to political allies of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, during the campaign for the May 2004 presidential elections.

Bolante left for the United States on December 11, 2005 to evade investigation. He is currently detained in the US.

"We wanted people to know that there are groups monitoring the corruption cases for them to feel that there is hope," Perez said in a phone interview Thursday.

He added they are also closely monitoring the controversy on the botched national broadband network project and the canceled government deal with China's ZTE.

The TAN group, which is a member of the Coalition Against Corruption or CAC, is set to launch its anti-corruption campaign Tuesday next week where they would identify other corruption cases which they consider as a priority. The coalition will also be outlining its projects and plans for 2008.

The coalition said it has become an imperative to pursue the cases more tenaciously until those involved are investigated, brought to trial, convicted and serve their sentence. "The Filipino people deserve no less."

CAC, in its four years of operations, implemented and supported counter-corruption projects in the areas of procurement, and delivery of essential public services particularly, in the sectors of health and education. - GMANews.TV



**IAMME**

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Join Date: Mar 2006  
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Quote:

Originally Posted by **3cr**

## **Imelda promises no more poor Pinoys in 2 years, if....**

Daily Tribune

<http://www.tribune.net.ph/headlines/20080410hed2.html>

*There will be no more poor Filipinos by 2011, former First Lady Imelda Marcos said yesterday, but that statement carries with it an Imelda condition.*

*A bright future beckons the poor Filipino people, despite the controversies and problems hounding the administration of President Arroyo, as the con-troversial Mrs. Marcos pledged "to give all the earthly desires" of the poor Filipino as willed by the late President Ferdinand Marcos.*

*As the economic woes of the Philippines continue to accumulate, with a worsening rice shortage and very high prices, the former First Lady who in the past was tagged as the "steel butterfly" said she is more than willing to help all poor Filipinos, but with one condition: That the Marcoses will not be tagged as thieves.*

*Fernando "Ding" Diaz, spokesperson for the flamboyant Mrs. Marcos, confirmed earlier reports that Mrs. Marcos has planned for two years for her to rid the country of poor people by way of a foundation created by her late husband.*

*"Yes, all of those promises are true," Diaz told the Tribune which asked for the verification of the report.*

*Mrs. Marcos was quoted as saying that she was ready to again take on the role of "mother" of the Filipino people via the so-called "Marcos Foundation for Truth, Justice and Peace."*

*The Marcos foundation's main goal is claimed to implement her husband's last will "to give all his earthly riches to the Filipino people."*

*"No Filipino poor in two years. Give me two years, I will complete this promise," she said.*

*There is a catch though.*

*Mrs. Marcos said that in order to facilitate or to start generating funds from the generosity of her late husband, people should first know and accept that they did not steal their accumulated wealth.*

*She asked media to play their role in conveying this piece of news to the people.*

*"To do that (give away earthly riches to the poor), you in the media have to help me tell the truth about the Marcos wealth. The Marcoses are not thieves. That is what should be corrected," she said.*

*Mrs. Marcos, showed media boxes of documents that she described as just "a portion of the proofs" that the Marcoses "did not steal from the Filipino people."*

*"In one account alone, we have **18,000 tons of gold**," she said.*

*Mrs. Marcos claims that the documents she holds on the gold bullions show the real ownership of the gold, which is Marcos, that she says is still being held by the United States Government.*

*The documents, she earlier said, show that Marcos, then a lawyer for a gold firm, was given his payment in gold bars by the firm for his legal services, all of which started long before he became president.*

...

Is this true? 18,000 tons of gold? Metric ton or short ton? If metric ton, that's worth more than \$540 billion\*! If short ton, \$484 billion\*!

That's too much money. If she gives it away, we'll just experience hyperinflation.

It's the first time I've read about Imelda talking about their gold deposits. Seriously.. is this true?

\*current gold prices

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**red\_jasper**

sine nobilitate



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▲▲▲ the marcoses do have tons of wealth (gold or otherwise), no doubt about it ☹

[3cr](#)

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005  
 Location: San Andreas Fault  
 Posts: 7,240  
 Likes (Received): 243

▲▲▲ If true mukhang sila na nga siguro ang nakahanap ng Yamashita gold/treasure binaon ng mga Hapon sa Pinas. Sana nga totoo ang offer and not a joke. Maraming mamamayan ang matutulungan nito. If true atleast in fairness mukhang natauhan na siya at gusto na niyang ibalik ulit sa tao. Buti na ito kaysa yung iba na sugapa at garapalan pa rin sa pagkabig at pagbalsa ng pera ng bayan/mamamayan. Kita mo nga nangyari kay Erap tapos paggastusan ng ilang milyon para mahatulang Kurakot/Plunder eh pinardon naman ni Ate Glo. Sinayang lang yung pera.

[3cr](#)

Atenista sa Frisco

Join Date: Sep 2005  
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## **Corruption behind P2-B loss in NFA rice — ex-chief**

By JESS DIAZ

The Philippine Star / ABS-CBN

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/storypage...StoryId=114793>

A former administrator of the National Food Authority (NFA) on Friday said P2 billion in taxpayers' money were lost to corruption after the food agency sold more than seven million bags of newly imported rice to private traders.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, meanwhile, accused Malacañang of merely floating an "artificial rice crisis" to justify the importation of more rice from other Asian countries to rake in more money in a discreet fund-raising campaign for the 2010 presidential elections.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Edno Josen, who was NFA administrator during the time of former President Joseph Estrada, said, "Clearly there was collusion to defraud the government between corrupt NFA officials and the buyers."

Josen was reacting to The STAR report on Thursday about the findings of government auditors that NFA lost P2.13 billion when it sold 7.2 million bags of imported rice to traders in 2005.

"NFA can sell to traders, but at a profit, not at a loss," he said, adding that his former agency should have recovered the full cost of importation.

He urged concerned officials, including the Office of the Ombudsman, to investigate the sale and to go after those responsible for the huge loss.

In its findings, the Commission on Audit (COA) said more than P2 billion in taxpayers' money went down the drain as a "result of giving undue advantage to affluent rice traders through subsidized selling prices, instead of the poor consumers."

"By any stretch of the imagination, it is not difficult to conclude that these affluent awardees/buyers/traders are not deserving of subsidy from the NFA," it said.

The findings indicated that the buyers made a killing by immediately turning around and selling the stocks, possibly even before paying the NFA.

Based on the cost of importation, COA valued the 7.2 million bags of imported rice at P8,846,823,927, but NFA sold it only for P6,712,493,513, or a staggering loss of P2.13 billion.

It said that while the NFA had resolved to recover the full cost of importation, including freight and insurance, it later inexplicably sold at a loss.

"In essence, the NFA subsidized the winning bidders since not all the costs in acquiring the imported stocks were recovered. It also turned out that the immediate beneficiaries of the NFA were no longer the low-income consumers of rice, but rather the more affluent and enterprising group in the grains industry," COA said.

It said the sale to traders "created another level of trading, which inevitably resulted in higher prices to consumers."

COA said the winning bidders were not the ones who withdrew their stocks but designated other persons to do that job for them. "There were cases where several winning bidders authorized only one and the same person, which is indicative of sale before withdrawal (of stocks)."

Even farmers' organizations, which were allotted 20 percent of the volume auctioned or more than one million bags, sent other persons to get their stocks, it said.

"The sheer volume of rice stocks awarded to and bought by farmers' organizations strongly suggests that they likewise belong to the affluent rice farmers/traders, contrary to the contention of (NFA) management," it said.

The government would have earned an additional P248.2 million had the stocks been sold to the highest bidder or had other bidders been required to match the best bid, it said.

### **'Fund-raising ploy'**

Binay, who joined pardoned former President Estrada in the continuation of the latter's "Lakbay Pasasalamat" in Mindoro, said he received information that Malacañang has started its fund-raising for the 2010 presidential elections.

He said the Arroyo administration is now conditioning the minds of the people that there is a rice crisis to justify its importation, and is using the NFA as front for its fund-raising for the 2010 elections.

"One of my informants told me that the rice crisis is artificial and there is no shortage at all. Let us assume the commission for the broker of the importation of rice is \$10 per ton. If the government will import two million tons then that would be a huge commission at the expense of the people," he said.

"The sufficient rice production in Central Luzon, Mindoro, Iloilo and Antique contradicts the government's

claims of scarcity in the production of rice. "Apparently, there is no need to import huge amount of rice," Binay said.

The feisty Makati mayor said the pronouncement earlier of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez that the government can declare a state of emergency and take over rice trading firms found to be hoarding rice is part of the government's ploy to justify its importation of rice.

Estrada, for his part, said the NFA is known for its notoriety involving huge "kickbacks" every time it imports rice, and it is not farfetched that the Arroyo administration is now starting its fund-raising campaign for the 2010 elections.

He said the Arroyo administration has proven during the 2004 presidential elections that it can and will use all government funds to ensure its continued hold on power.

Estrada said the claim of the Arroyo administration that there is a rice shortage in the country may also be intended to divert the attention of the people from the various anomalies that are being investigated by the Senate, such as the national broadband network (NBN) deal of the Arroyo administration with the China-based ZTTE firm.

### **'Barking up the wrong tree'**

A visibly irked President Arroyo meanwhile told officials of the National Bureau of investigation (NBI) and the NFA to focus on rice hoarding and profiteering and not on smuggling.

The President appeared irritated when NBI and NFA officials informed her that they found violations in the import documents of some of the warehouses they visited.

"You are barking up the wrong tree," Mrs. Arroyo said. She explained that since they have liberalized the importation on rice, "there is no illegal importation per se."

"The concern is hoarding and profiteering. We do not have enough investigative manpower to run over everything. The rice abroad is more expensive than the rice here... (We should) put effort on hoarding and profiteering. Do not be distracted," she added.

She also instructed the two agencies to attend to the illegal activities of some traders who re-mill NFA rice and sell it as commercial rice.

### **Crackdown causing panic**

But a top NFA official on Friday said the raids being conducted by law enforcement agencies on rice warehouses are causing panic among legitimate traders and may further worsen the rice crisis facing the government.

NFA spokesman Rex Estoperez said the raids have sent a "chilling effect" to the rice trading industry, as they perceive they are being singled out.

"The crackdown will mess up the coming harvest season since traders will be hesitant to continue their business," he said.

Estoperez insisted that there is no shortage of rice, contrary to reports, and they have enough buffer stock of rice.

He said the much publicized rice shortage is yet to come but people are already panicking and are beginning to hoard stocks which contributed to the increased demand of rice.

"People are lining up for cheap rice at NFA because of the negative reports about rice shortage. There is no rice shortage but there is a rice price crisis," he said.

The NFA spokesman also said some sectors are taking advantage of the rice crisis to further their political agenda and that detractors of the President are using the issue to blackmail the government by threatening to go on rice holiday if the crackdown continues.

### **Smuggled rice held**

In a related development, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Friday seized two shipments of alleged smuggled rice worth P12.6 million at the North Harbor in Manila.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said operatives of the bureau's Intelligence and Investigation Service confiscated the shipments after their owner, Jubilee Multi Tech Inc., failed to present necessary transport permit from the NFA.

"We want to make sure that the smugglers will not be able to take advantage of high prices of commodities, especially rice. We at the BOC recognize the tight rice supply problem in the country today," Morales stressed.

The shipments arrived aboard Carrier Vessel 2-GO 1 last March 19 at the Port of Manila (POM) and Manila International Container Port (MICP) either from Port of Cagayan de Oro or Port of Zamboanga.

He admitted they have yet to determine the origin of the seized shipments of rice, which have been turned over to the NFA. Officials said the smuggled rice might be sold to the public at an auction.

Morales also assured that the BOC would continue to strictly monitor entry of imported rice into the country despite the lifting of the benchmark on the regulated product.

### **Supplemental budget**

Meanwhile, Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. said the Executive department should consider sending a supplemental budget to Congress to fund the agricultural and fisheries program that President Arroyo recommended during the food summit in Clark Field, Pampanga.

Villar said "funding authority" was required if some of the funds eyed in the six-point food production plan were not covered by the national budget approved for this year.

He noted that a supplemental budget would "mean more accountability and transparency in its spending."

"The Constitution is clear on this: No money can leave the treasury without an appropriation from Congress," Villar said.

But if the Executive will argue that projects mulled for implementation in the program are already in the P1.227-trillion national budget, then the conclusion is that no new projects were launched because the President simply repackaged what were already in the law, Villar noted.

April 11th, 2008, 09:38 PM

#300

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## COA finds more swine anomalies

By REINIR PADUA

The Philippine Star / ABS-CBN

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/storypage...StoryId=114781>

The handling of funds worth P2.25 billion under the swine program of the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) has turned "from bad to worse" since it was started in 2004.

This surfaced as similar irregularities were found in succeeding years after the first anomalies were noticed in 2005, said Prof. Harry Roque of the University of the Philippines Law Center.

The government corporation is now the subject of a "full-blown legal investigation" by the Commission on Audit (COA) because of corruption allegedly at the "policy level" of the firm.

Citing highly placed sources, Roque said the COA report on Quedancor's operations in 2005 noted deficiencies in the accounting of P747 million in funds for the swine program.

He alleged that the P2.25 billion borrowed from the Land Bank of the Philippines, which could have been used to increase productivity of the country's rice farmers, were lost to graft and corruption.

Since Quedancor is a corporation attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA), Secretary Arthur Yap has repeatedly said that he had already ordered an investigation of the irregularities.

Roque told The STAR that a "special fraud report," to be released by the end of May, is now being prepared by COA after finding the same irregularities in the first report on the swine program.

Sources said the "special fraud report" will not just cover the financial aspect of the project, but also how the supposed corruption occurred, and the reasons behind it.

He said the report is separate from the annual audit being released by the COA.

DA Undersecretary Bernie Fondevilla said they welcome the COA's "special fraud report," noting that this would help the department in its own investigation.

"Let the COA do its job... It's a good thing and whatever the results will be, it will help us in determining what really happened (with the swine program)," Fondevilla said.

He added that the findings of the COA's special report could even be forwarded to the Office of the Ombudsman just like what the DA did with the first COA report on the matter.

Aside from the unrecorded receivables worth P747 million, the first COA report also noted alleged irregularities in the procurement of swine worth P1.66 billion and some "ghost deliveries" of input supplies.

Roque said the irregularities continued and some funds of the program were allegedly used to finance the campaign of certain senatorial candidates of the administration's "Team Unity" ticket in the last May 2007 elections.

Citing sources at Quedancor, Roque said about P800 million were used to fund the campaign of five administration senatorial candidates in the 2007 elections.

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