



SUPREME COURT OF THE PHILIPPINES
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Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

SECOND DIVISION

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES, **G.R. No. 231007**
Plaintiff-Appellee,

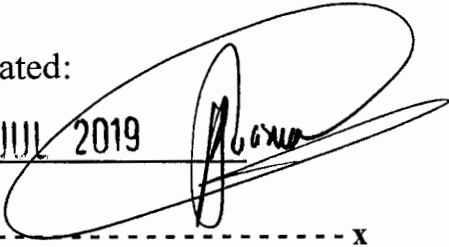
Members:

CARPIO, J., Chairperson,
PERLAS-BERNABE,
CAGUIOA,
J. REYES, JR.,
LAZARO-JAVIER, JJ.

- versus -

ANTONIO MARTIN y ISON,
Accused-Appellant.

Promulgated:

01 JUL 2019 

X-----X

DECISION

LAZARO-JAVIER, J.:

The Case

This appeal seeks to reverse the Decision dated September 23, 2016¹ of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. CR-HC No. 06912, affirming the conviction of appellant Antonio Martin y Ison for violation of Section 5, Article II of Republic Act 9165 (RA 9165)² and imposing on him life imprisonment and P500,000.00 fine.

¹ Penned by Associate Justice Francisco P. Acosta and concurred in by Associate Justice Eduardo B. Peralta, Jr. and then Court of Appeals, now retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Noel G. Tijam, CA rollo, pp. 120-130.

² Otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

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The Proceedings Before the Trial Court

Appellant Antonio I. Martin was charged with violation of Section 5, Article II, RA 9165 under the following Information:

That on or about the 17th day of February 2010 in the Municipality/City of San Leonardo, Province of Nueva Ecija, Philippines, and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, did then and there, willfully, unlawfully and feloniously have in his control and custody one (1) piec(e) of plastic sachet of Methamphetamine Hydrochloride (“shabu”), and sell the same to a civilian asset, without the necessary permit and/or license having been issued to him by the proper government agency, to the damage and prejudice of the Government.

CONTRARY TO LAW.³

On arraignment, appellant pleaded not guilty.⁴ Trial ensued.

Members of the Philippine National Police (PNP), namely: PO3 Alfredo Gavino, PO2 Jherome Songalia, and Forensic Chemist Jebie C. Timario testified for the prosecution. On the other hand, appellant and Emilio Portugal testified for the defense.

The Prosecution’s Version

On February 17, 2010, around 4:30 o’clock in the afternoon, PO3 Alfredo Gavino received a report from a confidential informant that appellant was involved in the illegal sale of dangerous drugs and that he (confidential informant) could buy these drugs from appellant later in the day. PO3 Gavino relayed this information to his superior Police Chief Inspector (PCI) Francisco Mateo II. PCI Mateo then directed PO3 Gavino to verify the information and launch a buy bust operation. PCI Mateo handed two (2) pieces of P100.00 bill to PO1 Jonathan Manuel for ultraviolet dusting.⁵

Around 6 o’clock in the evening, PO1 Manuel handed to PO3 Gavino the two pieces P100.00 bill dusted with ultraviolet powder. PCI Mateo called his men to firm up the buy bust operation on appellant. The confidential informant was tasked as poseur buyer, and PO3 Gavino and PO2 Jherome Songalia as arresting officers.⁶ PO3 Gavino gave the P100.00 bills to the confidential informant.⁷

³ Record, p. 1.

⁴ *Id.* at 18-19.

⁵ TSN, July 16, 2010, pp. 6-8.

⁶ *Id.* at 9-10.

⁷ TSN, December 6, 2011, pp. 5-6.



Thirty (30) minutes later, PO3 Gavino and PO2 Songalia proceeded to Lacson Colleges, Barangay Castellano, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija. The confidential informant who arrived there earlier was already talking with appellant. PO3 Gavino and PO2 Songalia positioned themselves about eight (8) meters away. Although they could not hear the conversation between the confidential informant and appellant, they could clearly see what was happening. After a while, they saw the confidential informant scratch his head indicating that the sale was already consummated.⁸ PO3 Gavino and PO2 Songalia immediately closed in.

PO3 Gavino frisked appellant and recovered from the latter the buy bust money. He also recovered from the confidential informant a small plastic sachet containing white crystalline substance. Thereafter, PO3 Gavino arrested appellant, informed him of his constitutional rights, and brought him to the police station.⁹

At the police station, PO3 Gavino turned over appellant and the seized items to the investigation officer PO3 Freddie Sevilla. In appellant's presence, they marked the plastic sachet with "ANG-1," representing PO3 Gavino's initials. They also conducted a physical inventory of the seized items in the presence of appellant, media representatives Cris Yambot and Melvin Yambot, Barangay Councilor Venancio M. Castillo, and the Acting Clerk of Court of the Municipal Trial Court of San Leonardo. Cris Yambot took photos of appellant together with the other witnesses.¹⁰

Thereafter, the investigating officer prepared a request for laboratory examination of the contents of the plastic sachet and another request for appellant's drug test and ultraviolet fluorescent powder test. PO3 Gavino took appellant and the plastic sachet to the crime laboratory. It was Forensic Chemist Jebie Timario who personally received the plastic sachet and appellant's urine sample.¹¹

Per Chemistry Report No. D-019-2010 (NEPCLO), Forensic Chemist Timario found the contents of the plastic sachet positive for methamphetamine hydrochloride (*shabu*), a dangerous drug.¹²

The prosecution offered the following exhibits: Exhibits "A" to "B" – two pieces of P100.00 bills with serial numbers NF004283 and VX564757, respectively;¹³ Exhibits "D" to "D-2" – Request for Laboratory Examination

⁸ TSN, December 7, 2010, pp. 2-3; TSN, October 11, 2011, p. 3.

⁹ TSN, December 7, 2010, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰ TSN, December 7, 2010, pp. 4 and 8-10; TSN, March 27, 2012, pp. 8-9; Also see Pinagsamang Sinumpaang Salaysay dated February 17, 2010, Record, pp. 4-5;

¹¹ TSN, February 12, 2013, pp. 6-10.

¹² *Id.* at pp. 6-7.

¹³ Record, p. 12.

on Seized Evidence;¹⁴ Exhibits “F” to “F-1” – Request for Ultraviolet Powder Examination;¹⁵ Exhibits “G” to “G-3” – Chemistry Report No. D-019-2010 (NEPCLO);¹⁶ Exhibits “H” to “H-3” – Chemistry Report No. PI-010-2010 (NEPCLO) [ultraviolet powder];¹⁷ Exhibits “I” to “I-5” – Receipt of Property Seized;¹⁸ Exhibits “J” to “J-2” – one heat sealed transparent plastic sachet marked “ANG-1A” containing 0.01 gram of methamphetamine hydrochloride (“*shabu*”).

The Defense’s Version

Appellant testified that on February 17, 2010, he was urinating outside his residence fronting Lacson Colleges at Barangay Castellano, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija. When he turned his head, he saw a man looking at him. He later learned that the man was Manuel Pangilinan. When he asked Pangilinan what he could do for him, the latter replied by also asking him if he was “Juanito.” He said he was “Tony.” Pangilinan then opened his palm and showed him a plastic containing “*bubog*.” Pangilinan asked him to admit that he bought it from a certain “Paolo.” Pangilinan also asked for the current location of “Paolo.” He replied: “*dala po ninyo yan, sir.*” To this, Pangilinan snapped at him: “*ayaw eh di tutuluyan ka namin,*” then, Pangilinan handcuffed him.¹⁹

Pangilinan dragged him toward PO3 Gavino. Together, the two boarded him into an owner type jeep to bring him to the police station. While in transit, Pangilinan told him they would set him free so long as he tells them where “Paolo” was. When he declined, Pangilinan elbowed him and threatened, “*tutuluyan ka na namin.*”²⁰

At the police station, Pangilinan and PO3 Gavino frisked him. They took his wallet containing P710.00 and a photocopy of his tricycle’s official registration. After detaining him inside the cell, Pangilinan and PO3 Gavino left. When they came back, they already had Paolo Ramos whom they also detained.²¹

Emilio Portugal confirmed that a police officer went to their area looking for Juanito. He later learned that it was appellant who got arrested.²²

The defense did not offer any documentary evidence.

¹⁴ *Id.* at 38.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 40.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 41.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 42.

¹⁸ *Id.* at 37.

¹⁹ TSN, November 22, 2013, pp. 3-6.

²⁰ *Id.* at 7-8.

²¹ *Id.* at 9.

²² TSN, January 28, 2014, pp. 3-6.

The Trial Court's Ruling

By Decision dated March 11, 2014,²³ the trial court found appellant guilty as charged, *viz*:

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the court finds the accused Antonio Martin y Ison GUILTY BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT of the Crime of violation of Section 5, Article II of the Republic Act No. 9165 and imposes upon him the penalty of life imprisonment and to pay a fine of P500,000.00.

SO ORDERED.²⁴

Through Order dated April 24, 2014,²⁵ the trial court denied appellant's motion for reconsideration.

The Proceedings Before the Court of Appeals

Appellant's Argument

On appeal, appellant faulted²⁶ the trial court for rendering a verdict of conviction against him. He argued that PO3 Gavino and PO2 Songalia both failed to categorically show that a sale of illegal drugs actually took place between appellant and the confidential informant. They, in fact, only testified that they could not hear the conversation between them.

Too, the testimonies of the prosecution witnesses were replete with inconsistencies, *i.e.*: (1) PO2 Songalia initially testified that he was the one who acted as poseur buyer, contrary to PO3 Gavino's testimony that it was the confidential informant who acted as poseur buyer; (2) PO3 Gavino testified that he was the one who brought the seized items to the crime laboratory while PO2 Songalia testified that it was PO1 Bruno; (4) PO3 Gavino testified the plastic sachet was marked with "ANG-1," but Forensic Chemist Timario testified the sachet she examined was marked "ANG-1A"; (5) PO3 Gavino initially testified he marked the sachet but later said that it was PO3 Sevilla who did.

The arresting officers failed to comply with the chain of custody rule. For one, the prosecution failed to present the confidential informant who acted as poseur buyer, PO3 Sevilla, and the evidence custodian from the crime laboratory. For another, the seized items were not marked *immediately* after seizure. Non-compliance with the procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9165 may be excused only when there

²³ Penned by Judge Celso O. Baguio, *CA rollo*, pp. 63-72; Record, pp. 133-142;

²⁴ *CA rollo*, p. 72; Record, p. 142.

²⁵ Record, pp. 155-157.

²⁶ See Appellant's Brief dated July 31, 2015, *CA rollo*, pp. 39-61.

are justifiable grounds and when the identity and integrity of the alleged drug were preserved, which was not the case here.

The People's Arguments

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) through Senior State Solicitor Ma. Zorayda V. Tejones-Zuñiga and Associate Solicitor Princess Jazmine C. Logroño, countered in the main: (a) the prosecution had sufficiently established all the elements of illegal sale of dangerous drug; (b) the police officers' failure to hear the conversation between the seller and the poseur buyer is not fatal to the cause of the prosecution considering that PO2 Songalia testified that he saw appellant hand the sachet to the confidential informant. The important aspect of the modus operandi is not hearing, but seeing the appellant sell dangerous drugs to the poseur buyer; (c) minor inconsistencies in the testimonies of the prosecution witnesses do not impair their credibility; (d) the witnesses had shown the unbroken chain of custody of the seized item from the time it was sold to the confidential informant up to the time it was presented in court; (e) non-presentation of the poseur buyer is not fatal; and (f) substantial compliance with the procedure under Section 21, IRR of RA 9165 is sufficient so long as the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized item were preserved.²⁷

The Court of Appeals' Ruling

By its assailed Decision dated September 23, 2016,²⁸ the Court of Appeals affirmed in this wise:

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the instant Appeal is **DENIED**. Accordingly, the Decision of the Regional Trial Court, Third Judicial Region, Branch 34, Gapan City, Nueva Ecija, in Criminal Case No. 14180-10, dated 11 March 2014 is hereby **AFFIRMED**.⁹

SO ORDERED.²⁹

The Present Petition

Appellant now seeks affirmative relief from the Court and pleads anew for his acquittal.

For the purpose of this appeal, both appellant and the People manifested that, in lieu of supplemental briefs, they were adopting their respective briefs before the Court of Appeals.³⁰

²⁷ See the Appellee's Brief dated December 3, 2015, *CA rollo*, pp. 78-106.

²⁸ *CA rollo*, pp. 120-130.

²⁹ *Id.* at 129.

³⁰ *Rollo*, pp. 20-22 and 25-28.

Issue

Did the Court of Appeals err when it affirmed appellant's conviction for violation of Section 5, Article II, RA 9165 (illegal sale of dangerous drugs)?

Ruling

In illegal drugs cases, the drug itself constitutes the *corpus delicti* of the offense. The prosecution is, therefore, tasked to establish that the substance illegally possessed by the accused is the same substance presented in court.³¹

To ensure the integrity of the seized drug item, the prosecution must account for each link in its chain of custody enumerates the **links** in the chain of custody that must be shown for the successful prosecution of illegal sale of dangerous drugs, i.e. **first**, the seizure and marking, if practicable, of the illegal drug recovered from the accused by the apprehending officer; **second**, the turnover of the illegal drug seized by the apprehending officer to the investigating officer; **third**, the turnover by the investigating officer of the illegal drug to the forensic chemist for laboratory examination; and **fourth**, the turnover and submission of the marked illegal drug seized from the forensic chemist to the court.³²

This is the chain of custody rule. It came to fore due to the unique characteristics of illegal drugs which render them indistinct, not readily identifiable, and easily open to tampering, alteration, or substitution either by accident or otherwise.³³

Appellant was charged with illegal sale of dangerous drugs allegedly committed on February 17, 2010. The applicable law is RA 9165 before its amendment in 2014.

Section 21 of RA 9165 prescribes the standard in preserving the *corpus delicti* in illegal drug cases, viz:

Section 21. Custody and Disposition of Confiscated, Seized, and/or Surrendered Dangerous Drugs, Plant Sources of Dangerous Drugs, Controlled Precursors and Essential Chemicals, Instruments/Paraphernalia and/or Laboratory Equipment. — The PDEA shall take charge and have custody of all dangerous drugs, plant sources of dangerous drugs, controlled precursors and essential chemicals, as well as instruments/paraphernalia and/or laboratory equipment so confiscated, seized and/or surrendered, for proper disposition in the following manner:

³¹ See *People v. Barte*, 806 Phil. 533, 542 (2017).

³² *People of the Philippines v. Myrna Gayoso*, 808 Phil. 19, 31 (2017).

³³ See *People v. Hementiza*, 807 Phil. 1017, 1026 (2017).

- 1. The apprehending team having initial custody and control of the drugs shall, **immediately after seizure** and confiscation, **physically inventory and photograph** the same **in the presence of the accused** or the person/s from whom such items were confiscated and/or seized, or his/her representative or counsel, **a representative from the media and the Department of Justice (DOJ), and any elected public official** who shall be required to sign the copies of the inventory and be given a copy thereof. (Emphasis supplied)

x x x x x x x x x

The IRR of RA 9165 further commands:

Section 21. (a) The apprehending officer/team having initial custody and control of the drugs shall, immediately after seizure and confiscation, physically inventory and photograph the same in the presence of the accused or the person/s from whom such items were confiscated and/or seized, or his/her representative or counsel, a representative from the media and the Department of Justice (DOJ), and any elected public official who shall be required to sign the copies of the inventory and be given a copy thereof: x x x Provided, further, that non-compliance with these requirements under justifiable grounds, as long as the integrity and the evidentiary value of the seized items are properly preserved by the apprehending officer/team, shall not render void and invalid such seizures of and custody over said items; (Underscoring supplied)

x x x x x x x x x

The first link speaks of seizure and marking which should be done immediately at the place of arrest and seizure. It also includes the physical inventory and photograph of the seized or confiscated drugs which should be done in the presence of the accused, a media representative, a representative from the Department of Justice (DOJ), and any elected public official.

On this score, PO3 Gavino testified:

x x x x x x x x x

- Q: What did you do with that shabu?
- A: We brought it to the police station and gave it to the police investigator for purposes of examination, sir.
- Q: Did you do anything to the shabu while you were still in that place where you arrested the suspect?
- A: We did not do anything, sir.³⁴

x x x x x x x x x

³⁴ TSN, December 7, 2010, p. 4.

Q: Mr. Witness, where did you put the markings?

A: Inside the investigation office of the police station of San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija.³⁵

x x x

x x x

x x x

Q: What happened to the police station, you said you conducted an inventory?

A: There is (a) representative from the media, court and barangay.³⁶

x x x

x x x

x x x

PO3 Gavino's testimony, on its face, bears how the chain of custody here had been repeatedly breached many times over.

First. The drug item was not marked at the place where it was seized. A similar circumstance obtained in *People v. Ramirez*³⁷ wherein the Court, in acquitting appellant therein, ruled that the marking should be done in the presence of the apprehended violator immediately upon confiscation to truly ensure that they are the same items that enter the chain of custody. The Court noted that the time and distance from the scene of the arrest until the drugs were marked at the barangay hall were too substantial that one could not help but think that the evidence could have been tampered.

Here, appellant was arrested at the Lacson Colleges, Barangay Castellano, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija. The arresting officers then boarded him into an owner type jeep to be taken to the police station. En route, the seized item remained unmarked. It was exposed to switching, planting, and contamination during the entire trip. Investigating officer PO3 Sevilla only marked the drug item after it was turned over to him at the police station. By that time, it was no longer certain that what was shown to him was the same item seized from appellant. PO3 Gavino did not offer any justification for this procedural lapse.

Notably, PO3 Gavino flip-flopped on who supposedly marked the seized item. He initially testified it was PO3 Sevilla, thus:

x x x

x x x

x x x

Q: Before he made that request, did you see what he did with that plastic sachet?

A: The police investigator placed a marking on it, sir.³⁸

x x x

x x x

x x x

³⁵ TSN, March 27, 2012, p. 3.

³⁶ *Id.* at 8-9

³⁷ G.R. No. 225690, January 17, 2018, citing *People v. Sanchez*, 590 Phil. 214, 241 (2008).

³⁸ TSN, December 7, 2010, p. 4.

together with the alleged witnesses to the inventory.⁴² But the sachet purportedly seized from appellant was not photographed. Again, no explanation was offered for this omission. Even the photo allegedly taken of appellant together with the witnesses was not presented nor offered as documentary evidence.

In *People v. Arposeple*,⁴³ the arresting officers' failure to photograph the drug item weakened the chain of custody and resulted in the acquittal of therein appellant. There, the Court observed that the records and the testimonies of the prosecution witnesses were notably silent on whether photographs were actually taken as required by law.

Third. No DOJ representative was present during the inventory. PO3 Gavino's testimony reveals that the persons who witnessed the inventory were media representatives Cris Yambot and Melvin Yambot, Barangay Councilor Venancio M. Castillo, and the acting clerk of court of the Municipal Trial Court of San Leonardo. But the DOJ representative was conspicuously absent.

In *People v. Seguinte*,⁴⁴ the Court acquitted the accused because the prosecution's evidence was totally bereft of any showing that a representative from the DOJ was present during the inventory and photograph. The Court keenly noted, as in this case, that the prosecution failed to recognize this particular deficiency. The Court, thus, concluded that this lapse, among others, effectively produced serious doubts on the integrity and identity of the *corpus delicti* especially in the face of allegation of frame up.

In *People v. Rojas*,⁴⁵ the Court likewise acquitted the accused because the presence of representatives from the DOJ and the media was not obtained despite the buy-bust operation against the accused being supposedly pre-planned. The prosecution, too, did not acknowledge, let alone, explain such deficiency.

Fourth. As for the third and fourth links, they were as severely broken as the first. To begin with, there was absolutely no showing how the alleged seized item was stored after it was examined by PCI Timario. No evidence, testimonial nor documentary, was offered to identify the person to whom PCI Timario gave the specimen after examination and where the same was kept until it was retrieved by PCI Timario and presented in court. Indubitably, this is another breach of the chain of custody rule. As held in the landmark case of *Mallillin v. People*:⁴⁶

⁴² TSN, December 7, 2010, pp. 11-12.

⁴³ G.R. No. 205787, November 22, 2017.

⁴⁴ G.R. No. 218253, June 20, 2018.

⁴⁵ G.R. No. 222563, July 23, 2018.

⁴⁶ 576 Phil. 576, 587 (2008).

As a method of authenticating evidence, the chain of custody rule requires that the admission of an exhibit be preceded by evidence sufficient to support a finding that the matter in question is what the proponent claims it to be. **It would include testimony about every link in the chain, from the moment the item was picked up to the time it is offered into evidence, in such a way that every person who touched the exhibit would describe how and from whom it was received, where it was and what happened to it while in the witness' possession, the condition in which it was received and the condition in which it was delivered to the next link in the chain.** These witnesses would then describe the **precautions taken to ensure that there had been no change in the condition of the item and no opportunity for someone not in the chain to have possession of the same.** (Emphasis supplied)

Indeed, the multiple violations of the chain of custody rule here cast serious uncertainty on the identity and integrity of the *corpus delicti*. The metaphorical chain did not link at all, albeit, it unjustly restrained appellant's right to liberty. Verily, therefore, a verdict of acquittal is in order.

Strict adherence to the chain of custody rule must be observed;⁴⁷ the precautionary measures employed in every transfer of the seized drug item, proved to a moral certainty. The sheer ease of planting drug evidence *vis-à-vis* the severity of the impossible penalties in drugs cases compels strict compliance with the chain of custody rule.

We have clarified though that a perfect chain may not be possible to obtain at all times because of varying field conditions.⁴⁸ In fact, the IRR of RA 9165 offers a saving clause allowing leniency whenever justifiable grounds exist which warrant deviation from established protocol so long as the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized items are properly preserved.⁴⁹

Unfortunately, however, PO3 Gavino and PO2 Songalia did not at all offer any explanation which would have excused the buy-bust team's stark failure to comply with the chain of custody rule here. Consequently, the condition for the saving clause to become operational was not complied with. For the same reason, the proviso "*so long as the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized items are properly preserved,*" does not come into play.

We emphasize that life imprisonment, no less, is imposed for illegal sale of dangerous drugs even for the minutest amount, as in this case where the alleged drug only weighed 0.01 gram. It becomes inevitable that safeguards against abuses of power in the conduct of buy-bust operations be strictly implemented. The purpose is to eliminate wrongful arrests and, worse, convictions. The evils of switching, planting or contamination of

⁴⁷ *People v. Lim*, G.R. No. 231989, September 04, 2018.

⁴⁸ See *People v. Abetong*, 735 Phil. 476, 485 (2014).

⁴⁹ See Section 21 (a), Article II, of the IRR of RA 9165.

the *corpus delicti* under the regime of RA 6425, otherwise known as the “Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972,” could again be resurrected if the lawful requirements were otherwise lightly brushed aside.⁵⁰

As amply discussed, the chain of custody here had been breached many times over; the metaphorical chain, irreparably broken. Consequently, the identity and integrity of the seized drug item were not deemed to have been preserved. Perforce, appellant must be unshackled, acquitted, and released from restraint.

Suffice it to state that the presumption of regularity in the performance of official functions⁵¹ cannot substitute for compliance and mend the broken links. For it is a mere disputable presumption that cannot prevail over clear and convincing evidence to the contrary.⁵² And here, the presumption was sufficiently overturned by compelling evidence on record of the repeated breach of the chain of custody rule.

ACCORDINGLY, the appeal is **GRANTED**. The Decision dated September 23, 2016 of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. CR-HC No. 06912 is **REVERSED AND SET ASIDE**. Appellant Antonio Martin y Ison is **ACQUITTED** of violation of Section 5, Article II of Republic Act 9165.

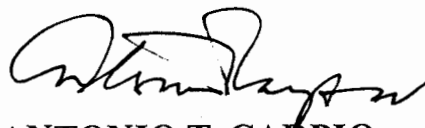
The Court further **DIRECTS** the Director of the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa City: (a) to cause the immediate release of Antonio Martin y Ison from custody unless he is being held for some other lawful cause; and (b) to inform the Court of the action taken within five days from notice.

Let an entry of final judgment be issued immediately.

SO ORDERED.


AMY C. LAZARO-JAVIER
Associate Justice

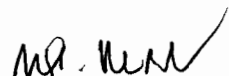
WE CONCUR:

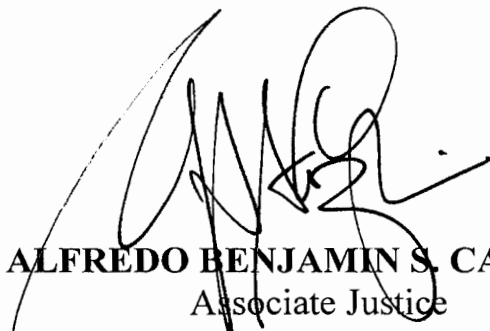

ANTONIO T. CARPIO
Associate Justice
Chairperson

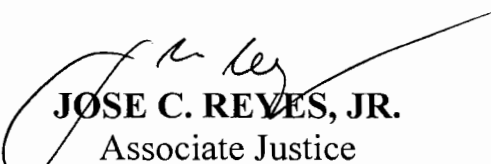
⁵⁰ See *People v. Luna*, G.R. No. 219164, March 21, 2018.

⁵¹ Section 3(m), Rule 131, Rules of Court

⁵² *People v. Cabiles*, 810 Phil. 969, 976 (2017).



ESTELA M. PERLAS-BERNABE
Associate Justice


ALFREDO BENJAMIN S. CAGUIOA
Associate Justice


JOSE C. REYES, JR.
Associate Justice

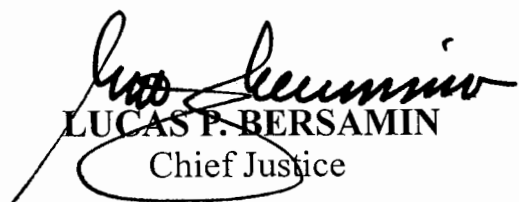
ATTESTATION

I attest that the conclusions in the above Decision had been reached in consultation before the case was assigned to the writer of the opinion of the Court's division.


ANTONIO T. CARPIO
Associate Justice
Chairperson, Second Division

CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to Section 13, Article VIII of the Constitution, I certify that the conclusions in the above Decision had been reached in consultation before the case was assigned to the writer of the opinion of the Court's Division.


LUCAS P. BERSAMIN
Chief Justice