



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

FIRST DIVISION

NOTICE

Sirs/Mesdames:

Please take notice that the Court, First Division, issued a Resolution dated February 17, 2020 which reads as follows:

“G.R. No. 247971 (People of the Philippines v. Mario Sawal y Agubang)

The Case

This appeal assails the Decision¹ dated November 29, 2018 of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. CR HC No. 09629 affirming appellant Mario Sawal’s conviction for: (a) violation of Section 5, Article II of Republic Act No. 9165² (RA 9165) and imposing on him life imprisonment and Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱400,000.00) fine; and (b) Section 11 of the same Act and imposing on him imprisonment of twelve (12) years and one (1) day as minimum to fourteen (14) years and eight (8) months as maximum and Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱300,000.00) fine.

The Charge

Appellant Mario Sawal y Agubang was charged with violations of Sections 5 and 11 of Article II of RA 9165, for the sale of 0.083 gram of methamphetamine hydrochloride, otherwise known as “shabu” and possession of one (1) heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet of the same drug weighing a total of 0.037 gram under two (2) separate Informations, respectfully, thus:

Criminal Case No. 2015-0336: (Illegal Possession)

- over – fourteen (14) pages ...

¹ Penned by Associate Justice Mariflor P. Punzalan Castillo and concurred in by Associate Justices Danton Q. Bueser and Pablito A. Perez; *rollo*, pp. 3-24.

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

That on June 20, 2015, at around 5:20 in the afternoon, in Zone 8, Brgy. San Roque, Camaligan, Camarines Sur and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, not being authorized by law, did then and there, willfully, unlawfully, knowingly and consciously aware of being in possession of methamphetamine hydrochloride (*shabu*) marked as Specimen B-(EOB-2 6/20/2015) = 0.083 gram, a dangerous drug, to the damage and prejudice of the Republic of the Philippines.

CONTRARY TO LAW.³

Criminal Case No. 2015-0337: (Illegal Sale)

That on June 20, 2015, at around 5:20 in the afternoon, in Zone 8, Brgy. San Roque, Camaligan, Camarines Sur and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, not being authorized by law, for and in consideration of Three Hundred (P300.00) Pesos, did then and there, willfully, unlawfully and feloniously sell and deliver to a poseur-buyer, one (1) piece small heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet marked as Specimen A marked as EOB-1-6/20/15 containing Methamphetamine Hydrochloride (*shabu*), a dangerous drug, with a recorded net weigh of 0.037 gram, to the damage and prejudice of the Republic of the Philippines.

CONTRARY TO LAW.⁴

On arraignment, appellant pleaded “not guilty” to both charges.⁵

The Proceedings Before the Trial Court

PO2 Errol Olos Boquiron (PO2 Boquiron), SPO1 Lex Gangawan (SPO1 Gangawan), PCI Josephine Macura Clemen, Department of Justice (DOJ) Representative Rhyan Gratil, and PO2 Kevin Rebuya Batalla (PO2 Batalla) testified for the prosecution while appellant testified as sole witness for the defense.

The Prosecution’s Evidence

PO2 Boquiron testified that in the morning of June 20, 2015, acting Chief of Police, Police Senior Inspector Aldin Orquita conducted a briefing for a buy-bust operation. During the briefing, he was designated as the poseur-buyer to be accompanied by an “action agent” who was tasked to communicate with appellant, the person subject of the operation, while the rest of the team would act as back-

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³ *Rollo*, pp. 3-4.

⁴ Record, p. 1.

⁵ *Id.* at 32.

up. The action agent received three (3) pieces of ₱100.00 peso bills marked “EBD” as buy bust money.⁶

Around 5 o'clock in the afternoon, he, the action agent, and the backup team proceeded to the target area. Five (5) minutes later, a *pedicab* arrived and the action agent informed him that one of the two (2) men on board the *pedicab* was appellant. When appellant and his companion alighted, the action agent approached them and handed to appellant the buy-bust money. In return, appellant gave him a small plastic sachet containing white crystalline substance. In the presence of appellant, the action agent gave the plastic sachet to him. Thereafter, the action agent removed the towel around his shoulder, signaling the consummation of the transaction. He arrested appellant and the back-up team closed in. Meantime, he marked the seized item with EOB-1 6/20/15 in the presence of appellant, himself. While the operation was still ongoing, in the presence of DOJ representative Gratil, barangay kagawad Ronaldo de Loyola and media representative Sonny Basa, he conducted a bodily search of appellant. Recovered from appellant were a medium sized plastic sachet with the same white crystalline substance marked EOB-2 6/20/15 and three (3) pieces of ₱100.00 bills marked EOB-3 6/20/15.⁷

The inventory and photographing of the seized items were done in the presence of the mandatory witnesses. Thereafter, they proceeded to the Regional Crime Laboratory in Legaspi City, Albay for the examination of the seized items together with the request for laboratory examination. There, the seized items were received by SPO1 Gangawan.⁸

SPO1 Gangawan testified that he received from PO2 Boquiron a letter request for examination together with one (1) small heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet with white crystalline substance and a piece of medium heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet with the same content marked as EOB-1 6/20/15 and EOB-2 6/20/15, respectively. He placed the items in one transparent plastic sachet indicating the case number, his initials and the date of receipt. Afterwards, he put the evidence in their evidence box for examination by the forensic chemist.⁹

Forensic Chemist PCI Josephine Clemen testified that on June 21, 2015, she received a letter request for examination with two (2)

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⁶ *Rollo*, pp. 4-5.

⁷ *Id.* at 5-6.

⁸ *Id.* at 6.

⁹ *Id.* at 6-7.

self-sealing transparent plastic sachets marked EOB-1 6/20/15 and EOB-2 6/20/15 from SPO1 Gangawan. Thereafter, she conducted physical, chemical, and confirmatory tests on the specimens which yielded positive results for methamphetamine hydrochloride, a dangerous drug. Before coming to court, she retrieved the pieces of evidence from their evidence custodian PO3 Maribel Bungon Bagato.¹⁰

During trial, the official photographer PO2 Batalla identified the photographs he took during the marking and inventory of the seized items.¹¹

DOJ representative Gratil also took the stand and identified his signature on the inventory. He also testified that he was present when PO2 Boquiron and kagawad de Loyola signed the inventory. He added that he did not see the media representative Sonny Basa around when he signed the inventory.¹²

The prosecution offered as documentary evidence Chemistry Report No. D-294-2015,¹³ Request for Laboratory Examination,¹⁴ Spot Report,¹⁵ Preoperational Report,¹⁶ Coordination Form,¹⁷ Booking and Information Report,¹⁸ Inventory Sheet,¹⁹ Chain of Custody Form,²⁰ Medical Certification,²¹ Station Order dated May 15, 2015,²² Police Blotter Entry No. 4996,²³ Affidavit of Arrest,²⁴ and Certificate of Coordination.²⁵

The Defense's Evidence

Appellant testified that on June 20, 2015, he was at his father's house in Felix Plazo, Sabang, Naga City because he was asking for money to buy rice. After around thirty (30) minutes, he left and took a

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¹⁰ *Id.* at 7.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Record, p. 10; Exhibit "A"

¹⁴ *Id.* at 9; Exhibit "D"

¹⁵ *Id.* at 11; Exhibit "E"

¹⁶ *Id.* at 12; Exhibit "F"

¹⁷ *Id.* at 13; Exhibit "G"

¹⁸ *Id.* at 15; Exhibit "H"

¹⁹ *Id.* at 16; Exhibit "I"

²⁰ *Id.* at 17; Exhibit "J"

²¹ *Id.* at 18; Exhibit "K"

²² *Id.* at 19; Exhibit "L"

²³ *Id.* at 20; Exhibit "M"

²⁴ *Id.* at 3; Exhibit "Q"

²⁵ *Id.* at 14; Exhibit "R"

pedicab on his way home at Metroville, Sabang, Naga City. When the *pedicab* was about to enter Metroville, three (3) policemen flagged down the *pedicab* and arrested them. He was made to alight from the vehicle and ordered to duck on the ground.²⁶

Then, he was led to the other side of the street to wait. He was handcuffed while backup was called. He asked the officers why he was being arrested. They told him he was known to be selling *shabu*. When the backup arrived, he was boarded into the mobile patrol car for almost two (2) hours. Subsequently, a representative from the DOJ and a barangay kagawad arrived. He was asked to alight from the patrol car. The policemen took photos of him. He was asked to sign a document. After which, he was boarded into the patrol car around 5 o'clock in the afternoon.²⁷

They proceeded to a gasoline station on the way to Milaor. From the gasoline station, they went to the Camaligan Police Station where he was detained for two (2) days. It was only then that he learned of the charge against him for violation of RA 9165.²⁸

The defense did not offer any documentary evidence.

The Trial Court's Ruling

By Decision²⁹ dated May 17, 2017, the trial court found appellant guilty of violation of Sections 5 (illegal sale) and 11 (illegal possession), Article II of RA 9165, thus:

A. In Criminal Case No. 2015-0336.

WHEREFORE, the prosecution having established the guilt of the accused Mario Sawal beyond reasonable doubt, he is hereby CONVICTED and sentenced to suffer imprisonment for twelve (12) years and one (1) day as minimum to fourteen (14) years as maximum, in accordance with the Indeterminate Sentence Law, and to pay the fine of Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱300,000.00)

B. In Criminal Case No. 2015-0337.

WHEREFORE, the prosecution having established the guilt of the accused Mario Sawal beyond reasonable doubt, he is hereby CONVICTED and sentenced to suffer Life Imprisonment and to pay fine in the amount of Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱400,000.00)

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²⁶ Rollo, p. 8.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ Record, pp. 194-201.

The specimen subject of these two cases Exhs. 'B', 'B-1' and 'B-2' containing white crystalline substance are hereby confiscated. The prosecution is hereby directed to coordinate with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency for the proper disposition of the same.

SO ORDERED.³⁰

The trial court found that the prosecution was able to establish all the elements of the crimes charged beyond reasonable doubt. The identity of the seized drugs, the buy-bust money and appellant's identity were all proven. Further, it found PO2 Boquiron's testimony to be credible. The chain of custody was shown to be intact and unbroken when it was positively established that the seized items were immediately and personally marked by PO2 Boquiron at the place where the sale and the arrest took place and were subsequently turned over to SPO1 Gangawan. Thereafter, the seized items were turned over to Forensic Chemist Clemen for laboratory examination.³¹

The Proceedings before the Court of Appeals

Appellant faulted the trial court for finding him guilty of violations of Sections 5 and 11 of RA 9165 when the action agent who served as poseur-buyer failed to testify in court and PO2 Boquiron's testimony failed to establish his identity. It was not established beyond reasonable doubt that there was no possibility of substitution of the seized items and the buy-bust money as the testimony of the actual transaction lacked details. Too, the prosecution failed to establish that indeed a media representative was present during the marking, inventory and photograph of the seized items.³²

On the other hand, the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) maintained that appellant's arrest was the result of a legitimate buy bust operation. The integrity and evidentiary value of the seized dangerous drugs were never compromised as every link in the chain of custody was satisfactorily accounted for. PO2 Boquiran was truly the poseur-buyer and the action agent was only used as a go-between. Too, contrary to what appellant claims, there was nothing vague about PO2 Boquiran's statements that appellant indeed sold *shabu* to him through the action agent. As for the alleged absence of a media

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³⁰ *Id.* at 201.

³¹ *Id.* at 198-201.

³² *CA rollo*, pp. 22-39.

representative, Sonny Basa of DWNX Radio duly signed the inventory sheet and was properly identified in court.³³

The Court of Appeals' Ruling

By Decision³⁴ dated November 29, 2018, the Court of Appeals affirmed.

The Present Appeal

Appellant now asks the Court to reverse the assailed disposition of the Court of Appeals and prays anew for his acquittal. In compliance with Resolution³⁵ dated August 19, 2019, both the OSG and appellant manifested³⁶ that, in lieu of supplemental briefs, they were adopting their respective briefs before the Court of Appeals.

Issue

Did the arresting police officers comply with the chain of custody rule?

Ruling

The appeal is meritorious.

The dangerous drugs allegedly seized from appellant and those which he purportedly sold to the action agent constitute *corpus delicti*. Bearing the burden of proving the elements of the offense and the *corpus delicti* itself, the prosecution must establish the identity and integrity of the dangerous drugs in order to support a verdict of conviction.³⁷ It must prove that the dangerous drugs seized from appellant are truly the substance offered in court as *corpus delicti* with the same unshakeable accuracy as that required to sustain a finding of guilt.

The illegal sale and possession of dangerous drugs were allegedly committed on June 20, 2015. The governing law, therefore, is **RA 9165 as amended by R.A. No. 10640**, thus:

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³³ *Id.* at 61-77.

³⁴ Penned by Associate Justice Mariflor P. Punzalan Castillo and concurred in by Associate Justices Danton Q. Bueser and Pablito A. Perez; *rollo*, pp. 3-24.

³⁵ *Id.* at 22-23.

³⁶ *Id.* at 44-46; pp. 39-40.

³⁷ *Calahi v. People*, G.R. No. 195043, November 20, 2017, 845 SCRA 12, 20, citing *People v. Casacop*, 778 Phil. 369, 376 (2016) and *Zafra v. People*, 686 Phil. 1095, 1105-1106 (2012).

- (1) The apprehending team having initial custody and control of the dangerous drugs, controlled precursors and essential chemicals, instruments/paraphernalia and/or laboratory equipment shall, immediately after seizure and confiscation, conduct a physical inventory of the seized items 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, with an elected public official and **a representative of the National Prosecution Service or the media** who shall be required to sign the copies of the inventory and be given a copy thereof: *Provided*, That the physical inventory and photograph shall be conducted at the place where the search warrant is served; or at the nearest police station or at the nearest office of the apprehending officer/team, whichever is practicable, in case of warrantless seizures: *Provided, finally*, That noncompliance of 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 and custody over said items. (Emphasis supplied)

The provision embodies the first link in chain of custody rule. It is the duly recorded authorized movements and custody of seized drugs or controlled chemicals or plant sources of dangerous drugs or laboratory equipment of each stage from the time of seizure/confiscation to receipt in the forensic laboratory, to safekeeping and their presentation in court for identification and destruction. This record of movements and custody shall include the identity and signature of the person who held temporary custody of the seized item, the date and time when the transfer of custody was made in the course of the item's safekeeping and use in court as evidence, and its final disposition.³⁸

*People v. Omamos*³⁹ reiterated that the following four (4) links in the chain of custody must be proved:

First, the seizure and marking, if practicable, of the dangerous drug recovered from the accused by the apprehending officer;

Second, the turnover of the dangerous drug seized by the apprehending officer to the investigating officer;

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³⁸ *Largo v. People*, G.R. No. 201293. June 19, 2019.

³⁹ G.R. No. 223036, July 10, 2019.

Third, the turnover by the investigating officer of the dangerous drug to the forensic chemist for laboratory examination; and

Fourth, the turnover and submission of the marked dangerous drug seized from the forensic chemist to the court.

We focus on the first and fourth links which appellant asserts to have been breached.

The *first link* refers to seizure and marking. "Marking" refers to the apprehending officer or the poseur-buyer placing his/her initials and signature on the seized item. It is of utmost importance that the seized contraband be immediately marked because succeeding handlers of the specimens will use the markings as reference.⁴⁰ Marking though should be done in the presence of the apprehended violator and the witnesses mentioned under Section 21 of RA 9165 as amended by RA 10640 *i.e.* representative from the media or representative from the Department of Justice (DOJ), and any elected public official immediately upon confiscation to truly ensure that they are the same items which enter the chain of custody.⁴¹

As part of the chain of custody procedure, the apprehending team is also mandated, immediately after seizure and confiscation, to conduct a physical inventory and to take a photograph of the seized items in the presence of the accused or the person from whom the items were seized, or his representative or counsel, as well as certain required witnesses, namely: (a) if prior to the amendment of RA 9165 by RA 10640, a representative from the media **AND** the Department of Justice (DOJ), and any elected public official; or (b) if after the amendment of RA 9165 by RA 10640,⁴² an elected public official and a representative of the NPS⁴³ **OR** the media. The presence of these witnesses safeguards "the establishment of the chain of custody and removes any suspicion of switching, planting, or contamination of evidence."⁴⁴

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⁴⁰ *People v. Ismael*, 806 Phil. 21, 29 (2017).

⁴¹ *People v. Mendoza*, 736 Phil. 749, 761 (2014).

⁴² RA 10640 took effect on July 23, 2014. See OCA Circular No. 77-2015 dated April 23, 2015.

⁴³ The NPS falls under the DOJ. (See Section I of Presidential Decree No. 1275, entitled "REORGANIZING THE PROSECUTION STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, REORGANIZING THE PROSECUTION SERVICE, AND CREATING THE NATIONAL PROSECUTION SERVICE" [April 11, 1978] and Section 3 of RA 10071, entitled "AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND RATIONALIZING THE NATIONAL PROSECUTION SERVICE" otherwise known as the "PROSECUTION SERVICE ACT OF" [lapsed into law on April 8, 2010].)

⁴⁴ See *People v. Doctolero, Jr.*, G.R. No. 243940, August 20, 2019.

In Criminal Case No. 2015-0337, for sale of illegal drugs, the heat-sealed plastic sachet containing white crystalline substance retrieved from appellant during the buy bust operation was immediately marked at the place of the arrest by arresting officer PO2 Boquiron but in appellant's presence alone.⁴⁵ It was only after said marking that the insulating witnesses *i.e.* DOJ representative Gratil, barangay kagawad Ronaldo de Loyola, and media representative Sonny Basa arrived. This constitutes the first breach.

On the other hand, in Criminal Case No. 2015-0336, for illegal possession of dangerous drugs, marking was done in the presence of appellant and all three (3) insulating witnesses.

As for inventory and photography, in both cases, the same were done also in the place of the arrest in the presence of appellant and the required insulating witnesses DOJ representative Gratil, barangay kagawad de Loyola, and media representative Basa.⁴⁶

In fine, the first link in Criminal Case No. 2015-0337 (sale of illegal drugs) had been incipiently broken for lack of the required witnesses during the marking of the seized item.

We go to the *fourth link*. It refers to the turnover and submission of the dangerous drugs from the forensic chemist to the court.⁴⁷ In drug related cases, it is of paramount necessity that the forensic chemist testifies as to details pertinent to the handling and analysis of the dangerous drug submitted for examination *i.e.* when and from whom the dangerous drug was received; what identifying labels or other things accompanied it; description of the specimen; and the container it was in, as the case may be.⁴⁸

Here, while PCI Clemen testified on the results of the laboratory examination, she failed to disclose the specific tests she performed and the manner by which she handled the specimens under her custody in both cases. Too, she testified that before appearing in court, she retrieved the pieces of evidence from their evidence custodian PO3 Maribel Bungon Bagato.⁴⁹ The prosecution, however, did not present PO3 Maribel Bungon Bagato to testify on how she handled

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⁴⁵ TSN, November 18, 2015, p. 11.

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 17-24.

⁴⁷ *People v. Hementiza*, 807 Phil. 1017, 1026 (2017).

⁴⁸ Board Regulation No. 1, Series of 2002: Guidelines on the Custody and Disposition of Seized Dangerous Drugs, Controlled Precursors and Essential Chemicals, and Laboratory Equipment.

⁴⁹ TSN Forensic Chemist Josephine Macura Clemen, pp. 10-21.

the dangerous drugs from the time these were handed over to her by PCI Clemen until they were eventually brought to the court as evidence.

In *People v. Dahil and Castro*,⁵⁰ the Court acquitted the accused therein in view of the absence of the testimony of the forensic chemist on how she handled the dangerous drug submitted to her for laboratory examination, viz:

The last link involves the submission of the seized drugs by the forensic chemist to the court when presented as evidence in the criminal case. No testimonial or documentary evidence was given whatsoever as to how the drugs were kept while in the custody of the forensic chemist until it was transferred to the court.

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*People v. Mallillin*⁵¹ decreed:

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)

Accordingly, the final link in this case had been breached in both cases.

These lapses had cast doubt on the identity and the integrity of the *corpus delicti*. The metaphorical chain did not link, albeit it unjustly deprived appellant of his right to liberty.

In any event, while the chain of custody should ideally be perfect and unbroken, it is almost always impossible to obtain it.⁵² In this light, the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9165 bears

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⁵⁰ 750 Phil. 212, 237 (2015).

⁵¹ *Mallillin v. People*, 576 Phil. 576 (2008).

⁵² *People v. Adrid*, 705 Phil. 654, 672 (2013).

a saving clause allowing leniency whenever compelling reasons exist that would otherwise warrant deviation from the established protocol so long as the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized items are properly preserved.⁵³

In this case, the prosecution did not offer any explanation as to why the required witnesses did not actually witness the inventory of the specimen allegedly sold to PO2 Boquiron. They similarly did not offer any justification for the non-presentation of PO3 Bagato. Considering the gaps in the chain of custody, as discussed, it cannot be said that the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized drugs were properly preserved.

In *People v. Año*,⁵⁴ the Court decreed that if the chain of custody procedure had not been complied with, or no justifiable reason exists for its non-compliance, then it is the Court's duty to overturn the verdict of conviction.

The presumption of regularity in the performance of official duty arises only when the records do not indicate any irregularity or flaw in the performance of official duty. Applied to dangerous drugs cases, the prosecution cannot rely on the presumption when there is a clear showing that the apprehending officers unjustifiably failed to comply with the requirements laid down in Section 21 of RA 9165 as amended by RA 10640 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. In any case, the presumption of regularity cannot be stronger than the presumption of innocence in favor of the accused.⁵⁵

In cases involving dangerous drugs, imprisonment or even death await violators. Thus, to eradicate wrongful arrests and, worse, convictions, safeguards against abuses of power in the conduct of drug-related arrests must strictly be implemented. The pernicious practice of switching, planting or contamination of 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.⁵⁶

If the chain of custody procedure had not been complied with, or no justifiable reason exists for its non-compliance, the Court must acquit as a matter of right.⁵⁷

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⁵³ See Section 21 (a), Article II of the IRR of RA 9165.

⁵⁴ G.R. No. 230070, March 14, 2018.

⁵⁵ *People v. Escara*, G.R. No. 212170, June 19, 2019.

⁵⁶ *People v. Luna*, G.R. No. 219164, March 21, 2018.

⁵⁷ G.R. No. 230070, March 14, 2018.

WHEREFORE, the appeal is **GRANTED** and the Decision dated November 29, 2018 of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. CR HC No. 09629, is **REVERSED** and **SET ASIDE**. Appellant Mario Sawal y Agubang is **ACQUITTED** of violations of Sections 5 and 11, Article II of Republic Act 9165.

The Court **DIRECTS** the Director of the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa City to: (a) cause the immediate release of Mario Sawal y Agubang from custody unless he is being held for some other lawful cause or causes; and (b) to submit his report on the action taken within five (5) days from notice.

Let entry of judgment be immediately issued.

The letter dated October 12, 2019 of JInsp. Alberto R. Tapiru, Jr., Officer-in-Charge, New Bilibid Prison-South, Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa City, in compliance with the Resolution dated August 19, 2019 informing the Court that accused-appellant was received for confinement in the institution on October 13, 2017, is **NOTED**.

SO ORDERED.”

Very truly yours,


LIBRADA C. BUENA
Division Clerk of Court *at 3/13*

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The Solicitor General
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1229 Makati City

Court of Appeals (x)
Manila
(CA-G.R. CR HC No. 09629)

The Hon. Presiding Judge
Regional Trial Court, Branch 27
Naga City, 4400 Camarines Sur
(Crim. Case Nos. 2015-0336 to 37)

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