



CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

*Wilfredo V. Lapidan*  
WILFREDO V. LAPIDAN  
Division Clerk of Court  
Third Division

AUG 17 2018

Republic of the Philippines  
Supreme Court  
Manila

THIRD DIVISION

PEOPLE OF THE G.R. No. 225590  
PHILIPPINES,  
*Plaintiff-Appellee,*

- versus -

Present:

VELASCO, J., *Chairperson,*  
BERSAMIN,  
LEONEN,  
MARTIRES, and  
GESMUNDO, JJ.

MICHAEL CABUHAY,  
*Accused-Appellant.*

Promulgated:

July 23, 2018

*Wilfredo V. Lapidan*

X ----- X

DECISION

MARTIRES, J.:

This is an appeal from the 3 July 2015 Decision<sup>1</sup> of the Court of Appeals (CA) in CA-G.R. CR HC No. 06125, which affirmed the 7 March 2013 Decision<sup>2</sup> of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 120, Caloocan City (RTC), in Criminal Case No. C-81497, convicting herein defendant-appellant Michael Cabuhay (*Michael*) of the crime of illegal sale of dangerous drugs under Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

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<sup>1</sup> Rollo, pp. 2-11.

<sup>2</sup> Records, pp. 166-177.

## THE FACTS

In two Informations, both dated 21 May 2009, Michael was indicted for violations of Sections 5 and 11, Article II of R.A. No. 9165 for illegal sale and illegal possession of dangerous drugs, respectively. The accusatory portions of the informations read:

### Criminal Case No. C-81497 (Violation of Section 5)

That on or about the 19th day of May 2009, in Caloocan City, Metro Manila, and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, without authority of law, did then and there, willfully, unlawfully and feloniously sell and deliver to PO3 Lauro Dela Cruz, who posed, as buyer, METHYLAMPHETAMINE HYDROCHLORIDE (Shabu) weighing 0.04 gram, a dangerous drug, without the corresponding license or prescription therefor, knowing the same to be such.

CONTRARY TO LAW.<sup>3</sup>

### Criminal Case No. C-81498 (Violation of Section 11)

That on or about the 19th day of May 2009, in Caloocan City, Metro Manila, and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, without being authorized by law, did then and there, willfully, unlawfully and feloniously have in his possession, custody and control One (1) heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet containing METHYLAMPHETAMINE HYDROCHLORIDE (Shabu) weighing 0.04 gram, when subjected for laboratory examination gave positive result to the tests of Methylamphetamine Hydrochloride, a dangerous drug.

CONTRARY TO LAW.<sup>4</sup>

On 1 July 2009, Michael, with the assistance of counsel, was arraigned and pleaded “not guilty” to the crimes charged.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Evidence for the Prosecution***

The prosecution presented four (4) witnesses, namely: PO3 Lauro Dela Cruz (*PO3 Dela Cruz*), the police officer who acted as the poseur-buyer; PO3 Jose Martinez (*PO3 Martinez*), a member of the buy-bust team; Police Chief Inspector Stella Ebuena (*PCI Ebuena*), the forensic chemist; and PO3 Ricardo Montero (*PO3 Montero*), the investigating officer. The

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<sup>3</sup> Id. at 2.

<sup>4</sup> Id. at 16.

<sup>5</sup> Id. at 31.

defense, however, admitted some of the stipulations offered by the prosecution with respect to the testimonies of PO3 Montero and PCI Ebuena.

PO3 Dela Cruz testified that on 19 May 2009, at around 3:30 p.m., he was at the Caloocan City Police Station at Samson Road, Caloocan City, when their chief, Police Chief Inspector Christopher Prangan (*PCI Prangan*) tasked him, together with SPO1 Julio Lobrin (*SPO1 Lobrin*), PO3 Montero, PO3 Martinez, and PO3 George Ardedon, to plan for a possible buy-bust operation. Apparently, PCI Prangan received a telephone call from a confidential informant telling him about an ongoing sale of *shabu* at the BMBA Compound, Barangay 118, Caloocan City, by a certain alias "*Kongkong*" who was later identified as defendant-appellant Michael Cabuhay.<sup>6</sup>

During the planning, PO3 Dela Cruz was designated as the poseur-buyer. For this purpose, he prepared two (2) one hundred-peso bills on which he placed the markings "LP" on each upper left portion.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, the team proceeded to the target area.<sup>8</sup>

The buy-bust team met with the informant at the target area<sup>9</sup> and thereafter proceeded to the BMBA Compound with PO3 Dela Cruz, followed by the other members of the buy-bust team. When he saw Michael, PO3 Dela Cruz and the informant approached him. The informant introduced PO3 Dela Cruz to Michael as the buyer of *shabu*. Michael then asked him how much *shabu* he wanted to buy. PO3 Dela Cruz did not verbally respond; instead, he handed the marked money to Michael who accepted it and put it inside his pocket.<sup>10</sup> Michael then took out one (1) plastic sachet from his right pocket and gave it to PO3 Dela Cruz. Upon receiving the sachet, PO3 Dela Cruz scratched his head, the pre-arranged signal for his team to approach. At this point, PO3 Dela Cruz introduced himself as a policeman and arrested Michael. Meanwhile, the other members of the buy-bust team arrived and assisted PO3 Dela Cruz in apprehending Michael.<sup>11</sup>

After Michael's arrest, PO3 Dela Cruz and SPO1 Lobrin appraised him of his constitutional rights. Thereafter, PO3 Dela Cruz looked on as SPO1 Lobrin frisked Michael and recovered another plastic sachet containing white crystalline granules from the latter's right pocket. SPO1 Lobrin also recovered the buy-bust money from Michael.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> TSN, 7 October 2009, pp. 3-4, 14-15.

<sup>7</sup> Id. at 4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Id. at 8.

<sup>9</sup> Id.

<sup>10</sup> Id. at 9-10.

<sup>11</sup> Id. at 11.

<sup>12</sup> Id. at 12.



Meanwhile, in the same place of arrest, PO3 Dela Cruz placed the markings “MCV/LD BUY BUST” on the subject plastic sachet. PO3 Dela Cruz explained that “MCV” stood for Michael’s initials, while the “LD” were his. He further stated that he wrote “05/19/09” on the subject sachet.<sup>13</sup> PO3 Dela Cruz likewise claimed that he saw SPO1 Lobrin mark the sachet recovered from Michael’s right pocket with “MCV/JL 05-19-09,” the initials of SPO1 Lobrin and Michael.<sup>14</sup> Thereafter, Michael, as well as the pieces of evidence seized from him, were brought to their office where they were turned over to the investigator.<sup>15</sup>

PO3 Dela Cruz identified the accused and the two (2) sachets of illegal drugs before the RTC.<sup>16</sup>

PO3 Martinez corroborated the testimony of PO3 Dela Cruz as regards Michael’s arrest.<sup>17</sup>

As previously stated, the parties entered into stipulations with respect to the testimonies of PO3 Montero and PCI Ebuena. Specifically, as regards PO3 Montero, the parties agreed on the following stipulations:

- (1) That as investigator in these cases, the person of the accused and the pieces of evidence subject matter of the cases were turned over to him;
- (2) That he prepared a Letter Request (Exhibit “A”) addressed to the crime laboratory for the examination of the specimen (Exhibit “B”) attached thereto;
- (3) That the said specimen has been examined by the Forensic Chemist of the crime laboratory, the result of which was reduced into writing under Physical Science Report No. D-157-09 (Exhibit “C”), yielding positive result to the test for the presence of Methylamphetamine Hydrochloride;
- (4) That he prepared the *Pinagsamang Sinumpaang Salaysay* of the arresting officers, the Booking Sheet and Arrest Report, the Referral Slip, the Pre-Operation Report, the Coordination Sheet, the Evidence Acknowledgment Receipt, and the Affidavit of Attestation;



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<sup>13</sup> Id. at 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> Id. at 14.

<sup>15</sup> Id. at 14-15.

<sup>16</sup> Id. at 13-15.

<sup>17</sup> TSN, 10 November 2010, pp. 2-6.

- (5) That he caused the photocopying of the money used as buy-bust money and that he can identify the same.<sup>18</sup>

On cross-examination, PO3 Montero admitted that he did not place his own markings on each of the sachets of illegal drugs. He explained, however, that he placed his markings on another plastic bag wherein he placed all of the pieces of evidence.<sup>19</sup>

With respect to the testimony of PCI Ebuena, the parties stipulated on the following facts, to wit:

- (1) That the witness is an expert witness;
- (2) That on May 19, 2009, she is in receipt of (Exhibit "A") Request for Laboratory Examination of one (1) unsealed plastic sachet with SAID-SOTG EVIDENCE dated 05-19-09 markings containing two (2) pieces of small heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet containing a white crystalline substance believed to be *shabu* with markings MCV/LD (Buy-bust) and MCV/JL, both dated 05-19-09; Exhibit "B," Brown envelope with markings D-15709 "A-1" SGE 5/19/09; Exhibit "B-1," plastic sachet; Exhibit "B-2-a," white crystalline substance;
- (3) That she conducted a laboratory examination on the specimen submitted to their office, the result of which she reduced in writing as evidenced by Physical Science Report No. D-157-09 (Exhibit "C"); the findings as (Exhibit "C-1") and the signatures as (Exhibit "C-2").<sup>20</sup>

### ***Evidence for the Defense***

On its part, the defense presented Michael himself, his mother Aurora Cabuhay (*Aurora*), and Conrado Bungay (*Conrado*), Michael's stepfather. Their combined testimonies sought to establish Michael's innocence, as follows:

On 18 May 2009, at around four o'clock in the afternoon, Michael was in a drinking session with his two friends in front of his house when five (5) men arrived. Three of the men were SPO1 Lobrin, PO3 Dela Cruz, and a certain Roland Mateo, their neighbor and also a police officer.<sup>21</sup> The men

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<sup>18</sup> TSN, 16 June 2010, pp. 7-8; Records, pp. 75-76.

<sup>19</sup> Id. at 6.

<sup>20</sup> Records, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> TSN, 3 May 2011, pp. 4-5.

inquired about the whereabouts of one Erwin Villar, Michael's uncle. Immediately, one of the men whom Michael identified as SPO1 Lobrin frisked and handcuffed him. He was boarded in a black car and brought to the Sangandaan Police Station where he was detained. Despite his claim that nothing was taken from him, the men insisted that they were able to buy and confiscate an illegal substance from him.<sup>22</sup> He only learned the following day that he was being charged for violation of Sections 5 and 11 of R.A. No. 9165.<sup>23</sup>

Conrado and Aurora corroborated Michael's claim that he was just drinking in front of his house when he was suddenly apprehended by several policemen.<sup>24</sup>

### ***The RTC Ruling***

In its decision, the RTC acquitted Michael of violation of Section 11, R.A. No. 9165 for illegal possession of dangerous drugs (Criminal Case No. C-81498), but found him guilty for violation of Section 5 of R.A. No. 9165 for illegal sale of dangerous drugs (Criminal Case No. C-81497).

As to Michael's acquittal in Criminal Case No. 81498, the trial court opined that the prosecution failed to establish an unbroken chain of custody with respect to the heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet subject of the criminal case for illegal possession of dangerous drugs. The trial court reasoned that without the testimony of SPO1 Lobrin who allegedly frisked Michael and seized from him the plastic sachet, the identity of the dangerous drug was not established with reasonable certainty and the prosecution's theory on the crime had no leg to stand on.

On the other hand, with respect to Michael's conviction in Criminal Case No. 81497, the trial court was convinced that the prosecution was able to establish all the essential elements of the illegal sale of dangerous drugs. It gave full faith and credence to the version of the prosecution noting that unless there is a clear and convincing proof that the members of the buy-bust team were animated by improper motive or were not properly performing their duty, the testimonies of the witnesses-law enforcers deserve full faith and credit.



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<sup>22</sup> Id. at 6-9.

<sup>23</sup> Id. at 11.

<sup>24</sup> TSN, 8 November 2011; TSN, 5 February 2013.

The dispositive portion of the RTC decision reads:

Premises considered, this Court finds and so holds that:

- (1) In Crim. Case No. C-81497, accused Michael Cabuhay y Villar GUILTY beyond reasonable doubt for violation of Section 5, Article II of Republic Act No. 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 and imposes upon him the penalty of Life Imprisonment and a fine of Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000.00).
- (2) In Crim. Case No. C-81498, the accused MICHAEL CABUHAY is hereby ACQUITTED.

The drugs subject matter of these cases are hereby confiscated and forfeited in favor of the government to be dealt with in accordance with law.

SO ORDERED.<sup>25</sup>


Aggrieved, Michael elevated an appeal before the CA.

### ***The CA Ruling***

In its assailed decision, the CA dismissed Michael's appeal effectively affirming the RTC decision. The appellate court concurred with the trial court's assessment that the prosecution was able to prove all the elements of the crime of illegal sale of dangerous drugs. It further opined that the prosecution was able to preserve the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized item subject of the illegal sale of dangerous drugs. The dispositive portion of the appealed decision reads:

We DISMISS the appeal.

SO ORDERED.<sup>26</sup>

Hence, this appeal. 

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<sup>25</sup> Records, p. 177.

<sup>26</sup> Rollo, p. 11.

## ISSUES

Repleading his arguments in his appellant's brief filed before the CA, dated 5 November 2013,<sup>27</sup> Michael urges this Court to consider the following assignment of errors:

### I.

THE COURT A QUO GRAVELY ERRED IN CONVICTING ACCUSED-APPELLANT DESPITE THE PROSECUTION'S FAILURE TO PROVE HIS GUILT BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT.

### II.

THE COURT A QUO GRAVELY ERRED IN FINDING ACCUSED-APPELLANT GUILTY DESPITE THE BROKEN CHAIN OF CUSTODY OF THE ALLEGED CONFISCATED SHABU.

### III.

THE COURT A QUO GRAVELY ERRED IN DISREGARDING ACCUSED-APPELLANT'S DEFENSE.<sup>28</sup>

## THE COURT'S RULING

The appeal is meritorious.

The elements necessary in every prosecution for the illegal sale of dangerous drugs are: (1) the identity of the buyer and the seller, the object and the consideration; and (2) the delivery of the thing sold and the payment. Similarly, it is essential that the transaction or sale be proved to have actually taken place coupled with the presentation in court of evidence of *corpus delicti* which means the actual commission by someone of the particular crime charged.<sup>29</sup>

In prosecutions under the law on dangerous drugs, the illegal drug seized from the accused constitutes the *corpus delicti* of the offense.<sup>30</sup> As the dangerous drug itself constitutes the very *corpus delicti* of the offense, its identity and integrity must definitely be shown to have been preserved.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> CA rollo, pp. 41-54.

<sup>28</sup> Id. at 43.

<sup>29</sup> *People v. Hementiza*, G.R. No. 227398, 22 March 2017.

<sup>30</sup> *People v. Ismael*, G.R. No. 208093, February 20, 2017; *People v. Alcuizar*, 662 Phil. 794, 801 (2011).

<sup>31</sup> *People v. Enriquez*, 718 Phil. 352, 363 (2013).



For this purpose, the Court has adopted the chain of custody rule, a method of authenticating evidence which 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.<sup>32</sup>

The chain of custody is established by testimony about every link in the chain, from the moment the item was picked up to the time it is offered in 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.<sup>33</sup>

As the Court stressed in *People v. Nandi*,<sup>34</sup> the prosecution must account for the following links in the chain of custody of the seized illegal drug, to wit: *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.

Unfortunately, in this case, the prosecution failed to demonstrate an unbroken chain of custody.

***Non-Observance of the Procedural Requirements under Section 21 of R.A. No. 9165***

The Court observes that the buy-bust team failed to observe the proper procedure in the custody of confiscated dangerous drugs. Section 21, Article II of R.A. No. 9165 provides:

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. –



<sup>32</sup> *Mallillin v. People*, 576 Phil. 576, 587 (2008).

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> 639 Phil. 134, 144-145 (2010).

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- (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]

In this case, the prosecution was able to submit an inventory of the two (2) sachets of illegal drugs allegedly confiscated from Michael.<sup>35</sup> However, the only signatories to this inventory are the arresting officers PO3 Dela Cruz and SPO1 Lobrin, and the investigating officer PO3 Montero. Readily apparent from the same inventory is the fact that none of the persons required to sign the inventory, as enumerated under the law, were made to sign the same. The signatures of the accused or his counsel, or the representatives from the media, the Department of Justice, or any elected public official were clearly absent. Moreover, the prosecution did not present a single photograph of the seized illegal drug taken during the inventory as required by Section 21, R.A. No. 9165.

Because of these glaring procedural lapses by the police officers, the prosecution failed to show that the physical inventory, if it was performed at all, was done in the presence of the accused, his representative, representatives from the media and the Department of Justice, and an elected public official.

This evident non-observance of the mandatory requirements under Section 21 of R.A. No. 9165 necessarily casts doubt on the integrity of the *shabu* supposedly seized from accused.<sup>36</sup> This, in turn, creates reasonable doubt in the conviction of herein defendant-appellant for violation of Article II, Section 5 of R.A. No. 9165.

The Court is not unmindful of the rule that the failure to faithfully observe the procedural requirements under Section 21 would not necessarily result in the acquittal of the accused, provided the chain of custody remains unbroken.<sup>37</sup> However, such liberality could not be extended in this case as the same finds application only when there exists justifiable grounds for non-observance of the mandatory requirements under Section 21 of R.A. No. 9165, and none was offered in this case.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Records, p. 106; Exhibit "I," Evidence Acknowledgment Receipt.

<sup>36</sup> *People v. Jaafar*, G.R. No. 219829, 18 January 2017, 815 SCRA 19, 33.

<sup>37</sup> *People v. Manlangit*, 654 Phil. 427-443 (2011).

<sup>38</sup> *People v. Del Mundo*, G.R. No. 208095, 20 September 2017.

***Fourth Link in the Chain of Custody; Stipulations Required for Effective Dispensation of the Forensic Chemist's Testimony***

It must be recalled that the testimony of the forensic chemist PCI Ebuén was the subject of a stipulation by the prosecution and defense. However, even after admitting the stipulations offered by the prosecution with respect to PCI Ebuén's testimony, the defense insists that the prosecution could not take refuge in it as it did not complete the chain of custody.

The Court agrees with the defense.

In *People v. Pajarin*,<sup>39</sup> the Court ruled that in case of a stipulation by the parties to dispense with the attendance and testimony of the forensic chemist, it should be stipulated that the forensic chemist would have testified that he had taken the precautionary steps required to preserve the integrity and evidentiary value of the seized item, thus: (1) that the forensic chemist received the seized article as marked, properly sealed, and intact; (2) that he resealed it after examination of the content; and (3) that he placed his own marking on the same to ensure that it could not be tampered with pending trial.<sup>40</sup>

The said stipulations are wanting in this case.

Here, the prosecution offered and the defense admitted that PCI Ebuén is an expert witness; that on 19 May 2009, she received two small heat-sealed transparent plastic sachets including the subject of this case, with marking "MCV/LD BUY BUST"; and that the contents of the sachet yielded positive results for methylamphetamine hydrochloride or *shabu* after the laboratory examination thereon.

Although herein stipulations satisfied the first requisite as stated in *People v. Pajarin*, they failed to cover the second and third requisites required to establish that, after the laboratory examination, there would have been no change in the condition of the seized drug and no opportunity for someone not in the chain to have possession of and to tamper with the same. Absent any testimony regarding these precautions, doubt, that the illegal drug allegedly confiscated from the accused is not the same as that presented in court, remains. As a result, this reasonable doubt would prevent the

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<sup>39</sup> 654 Phil. 461, 466 (2011).

<sup>40</sup> Id.

prosecution from overcoming the presumption of innocence in favor of the accused.

The Court had already stressed the importance of establishing the precautions taken by the forensic chemist to ensure that the identity and integrity of the seized drug would be preserved after the conduct of the laboratory examination. On point is the case of *People v. Sanchez*<sup>41</sup> where the Court made the following pronouncement:

xxx. While we are aware that the RTC's Order of August 6, 2003 dispensed with the testimony of the forensic chemist because of the stipulations of the parties, we view the stipulation to be confined to the handling of the specimen at the forensic laboratory and to the analytical results obtained. **The stipulation does not cover the manner the specimen was handled before it came to the possession of the forensic chemist and after it left his possession.** To be sure, personnel within the police hierarchy (as SPO2 Sevilla's testimony casually mentions) must have handled the drugs but evidence of how this was done, i.e., how it was managed, stored, preserved, labeled and recorded from the time of its seizure, to its receipt by the forensic laboratory, up until it was presented in court and subsequently destroyed is absent from the evidence adduced during the trial.<sup>42</sup> [emphasis supplied]

To repeat, the failure to include in the stipulations the precautions taken by the forensic chemist after the conduct of the laboratory examination on the illegal drug, as well as the manner it was handled after it left her custody, renders the stipulations in her testimony ineffective in completing an unbroken chain of custody.

With the prosecution's failure to establish an unbroken chain of custody, the Court is now duty bound to render a judgment of acquittal.

**WHEREFORE**, the appeal is **GRANTED**. Accordingly, the appealed Decision, dated 3 July 2015, of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. CR HC No. 06125, which affirmed the Decision, dated 7 March 2013, of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 120, Caloocan City (*RTC*), in Criminal Case No. C-81497, is hereby **REVERSED** and **SET ASIDE**. Defendant-appellant Michael Cabuhay is hereby **ACQUITTED** for failure of the prosecution to prove his guilt beyond reasonable doubt. He is ordered immediately **RELEASED** from detention unless he is detained for another crime or lawful cause.



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<sup>41</sup> *People v. Sanchez*, 590 Phil. 214-245 (2008).


<sup>42</sup> *Id.* at 237-238.

**SO ORDERED.**

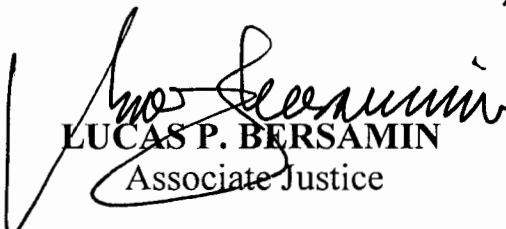


**SAMUEL R. MARTIRES**  
Associate Justice

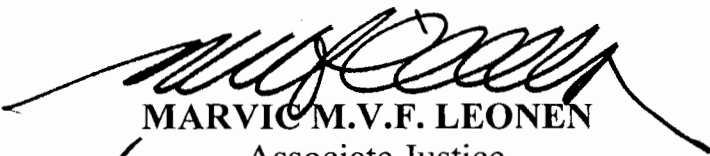
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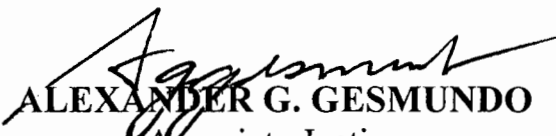
**PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.**  
Associate Justice  
Chairperson



**LUCAS P. BERSAMIN**  
Associate Justice



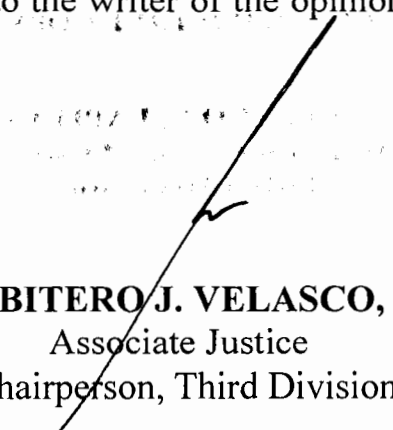
**MARVIC M.V.F. LEONEN**  
Associate Justice



**ALEXANDER G. GESMUNDO**  
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.



**PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.**  
Associate Justice  
Chairperson, Third Division

**CERTIFICATION**

Pursuant to Section 13, Article VIII of the Constitution and the Division Chairperson's Attestation, 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 Courts Division.



**ANTONIO T. CARPIO**  
Senior Associate Justice  
(Per Section 12, R.A. 296,  
The Judiciary Act of 1948, as amended)

RECEIVED  
DIVISION CHAIRPERSON  
Division of the Courts  
The Judiciary Act of 1948, as amended

