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COMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Dangerous Drugs jt. w/ Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 2068	Rep. Quimbo	Inquiry into the continued inability of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to prevent large-scale smuggling of illegal drugs into the country	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Robert "Ace" Barbers (2nd District, Surigao del Norte), Chair of the Committee on Dangerous Drugs, and Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 2068 in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Barbers noted that syndicated drug trafficking may already be well-entrenched in the BOC, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), and Philippine National Police (PNP), the very same agencies tasked to stop the proliferation of illegal drugs in the country.</p> <p>Based on HR 2068, the PDEA and BOC seized 500 kilograms of <i>shabu</i>, estimated to be worth P4.3 billion, concealed inside two magnetic lifters in an abandoned container at the Manila International Container Terminal (MICT) last August 7. The following day, four similar magnetic lifters, which were later discovered to have traces of illegal drugs, were found by authorities at a warehouse in General Mariano Alvarez, Cavite. Both the PDEA and PNP believe that the magnetic lifters found in Cavite are part of the shipment seized at the MICT.</p> <p>Invited to the hearing to present his side, former BOC Intelligence Officer Jimmy Guban alleged that dismissed PNP Senior Superintendent Eduardo Acierto asked him to look for a "consignee" for the four magnetic lifters, which were believed to have been packed with shabu estimated to have a street value of P6.8 billion. He claimed that it was relieved PDEA Deputy Director General Ismael Fajardo Jr. who introduced him to Acierto. All three were still in active service when the illegal shipment arrived.</p> <p>After intense questioning by the Members, Guban finally admitted that finding a consignee for the magnetic lifters, which turned out to be SMYD Trading, was not part</p>

<p>Continuation... Dangerous Drugs jt. w/ Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>of his regular functions but was a personal transaction with Acierto, who paid him at least P10,000.</p> <p>BOC Commissioner Isidro Lapeña decried the transaction and stressed that it is not allowed under customs regulations. He emphasized that any violation of these rules and regulations is subject to criminal action.</p> <p>Members of the Joint Committee also questioned Guban's financial capacity to travel abroad for 56 times in recent years despite having a low basic monthly salary of about P20,000 to P22,000 (Salary Grade 11). Guban cited the affluence of his wife's family, which he claims to own several companies.</p> <p>Guban was later cited in contempt by the Joint Committee for his untruthful and conflicting testimonies, refusal to answer relevant questions from the Members, and disrespectful behavior during the hearing.</p> <p>Right now, Guban is under detention at the Senate by virtue of a contempt order but was only allowed to testify at the hearing of the Joint Committee. The House Sergeant-at-Arms was instructed to immediately take custody of Guban right after the order of contempt issued by the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee against the latter is lifted.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Joel Layban Maritana recanted his statement given to the PDEA, during the latter's investigation, that he was the one who looked for a "consignee-for-hire," which in this case is the SMYD Trading, to receive the shipment of the questioned magnetic lifters. He stated that he only followed the instruction of Marina dela Cruz Signapan, president of SMYD Trading, to stick to what was written on the sworn statement that Signapan prepared for him. During the committee hearing, Maritana stated that he did not personally know Signapan and that he is not involved in the questioned shipment.</p> <p>Maritana was a member of The Guardians Nacionalista of the Philippines, wherein Guban serves as the president. Maritana claimed that Guban introduced him to Signapan.</p>
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