

## NBI nabs foreigner con man in Pasay City

**MANILA** — A foreign national using various identities and sought investors to cough up USD150,000 in exchange for what he claimed was a larger sum in his luggage held by a cargo firm has been arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) International Airport Division.

NBI officials on Thursday presented the suspect who identified himself as Justine Barlee, Jerry Rockstone and Jerry Brown and claimed at one point to be an American, a Liberian and a Jamaican national.

The man, who was arrested on Tuesday, also claimed to be American serviceman and presented a US Marine Corps and an American Passport No. 4877311994 to NBI agents. Upon verification with the US Embassy, the NBI said the passport had been declared lost in 2013 and was not issued to a "Jerry Brown".

The Embassy also said the man is not a member of the US Armed Forces.

During the entrapment operation in Pasay, the man also yielded documents and receipts of a luggage he claims as containing money at the Global Cargo brokerage firm.

The NBI concluded the man's modus was to convince unwitting lenders to give him money supposedly to get his luggage containing a large amount.

He was subsequently charged before the Pasay prosecutor for usurpation of authority or official functions and for using fictitious names and concealing his true names.

The suspect remains in NBI custody pending verification of his real identity with the Bureau of Immigration and consulates of the countries where he claims to be a national. (PNA)

## PH control of China-occupied islands in WPS ‘doable’: Palace

**MANILA** — The Philippines can definitely regain control of Chinese-occupied islands in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), Malacañang said on Thursday.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo made this reaction after the Social Weather Stations (SWS) released another survey result, showing that 93 percent of Filipinos believe that it is important that the government regain control over China-occupied islands in the disputed waters.

"Dapat nga 100 percent. Lahat ng Pilipino dapat (It should be 100 percent. It should be all Filipinos)... would want to have control over the areas that are supposed to be ours," Panelo said in a Palace briefing.

Panelo pointed out the reality that China insists on its "nine-dash line" claim, which covers nearly the entire South China Sea - including the Philippine-claimed Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal.

"But the reality is, may

problema tayo doon (we have a problem there) because China claims to own it too," he added.

Panelo, however, said regaining control may be possible since the Philippines and China continue to engage in bilateral negotiations to resolve the maritime dispute.

"Bakit hindi? Sinasabi na nga may negotiations eh. Kung pumayag ang ka-negotiate mo, o eh 'di done (Why not? We're saying there are negotiations. If who you're negotiating with agrees, then it's done)," Panelo said.

"Kung hindi naman pumayag, o 'di mag-usap pa uli (If they don't agree, then we'll negotiate again)," he added.

Asked about the chances that bilateral talks will be effective, Panelo said there is no way to find out unless the government tries.

"Eh, hindi natin alam kung anong (We don't know what are the) chances but we're doing it," Panelo said.

He also insisted that Pres-

## PRRD to summon ‘floating’ BOC personnel on July 15

**MANILA** -- Although keen on dismissing over 60 Bureau of Customs (BOC) employees allegedly involved in corruption, President Rodrigo Duterte on Thursday night said he will still give them a chance to explain in a meeting in Malacañang next week.

Duterte bared this, a day after he ordered the "freezing" of Customs officials and employees but did not disclose their names.

"Dito, dito ko sila pina-report Monday. (I am asking them to report here on Monday, July 15)," Duterte told reporters after the signing of loan agreement for the Malolos-Clark Railway Project in Malacañan Palace.

"I will relieve them of their duties. As yet, they are not ousted or dismissed because of their right to be heard. But ipinatanggal ko na

sila sa trabaho nila ngayon (I already removed them from their jobs) to prevent further damage sa (to) government interest," he added.

### Just employees

Duterte clarified that he will be firing BOC employees and not officials as earlier mentioned.

"Let me correct you. I'm talking about a number of employees sa (at) Customs," Duterte said.

Asked to further clarify, Duterte said he will be firing "those who are facing charges and those who are or who have been implicated in shenanigans."

While Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo earlier said Duterte will be dismissing 50 to 70 BOC personnel, Duterte also clarified in a speech that he will be firing a total of 64 employees from the agency.

"Most of them, yung

nandiyan na (those who are already there), we will be filing charges, 64 of them," Duterte said in his speech.

"So at this early, they might be also learning what's going on here and they are also hearing us. It's a simple case of 'you resign or I file charges' and that goes for all of us. We are workers of government and we serve the people, period," he added.

### Up to Ombudsman to file charges

Duterte said the implicated personnel may be players involved in a shipment done within the agency.

"Yes, those who are facing charges must be connected in connection to a shipment. Those who are the players. Well, they have to go," Duterte said.

Asked if these BOC personnel were involved in any shabu shipment in particular, Duterte said: "Hindi masyado (Not so much)."

## Over 1M Pinoys to benefit from First Time Jobseekers Act: DOLE

**MANILA** — More than a million first-time jobseekers are expected to benefit every year from the newly-approved First Time Jobseekers Act, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said Thursday.

According to DOLE Assistant Secretary Joji Aragon, the law also known as Republic Act 11261 "is a social legislation that provides a level playing field and tangible support for first-time jobseekers, regardless of age, to hurdle the common constraint of high cost of fees required in the job application process by both government and private sectors".

"The law stands to benefit around 1.3 million first time job seekers annually, which comes to around PHP2,400 in aggregate free government, clearances including National Bureau of Investigation, birth certificates, transcript of records from government schools and trading facilities," she said after the signing of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the RA 11261, which was

headed by DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello III together with other heads of agencies such as the Department of Finance, Department of Health, among others, in Manila.

"While this translates to PHP3 billion foregone government revenues, the government looks at this investment to bring double or triple fold return in achieving a productive human capital and workforce for the nation," Aragon added.

She added that under the administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, "the government invests on the youth, the out-of-school youth and other first-time job seekers by providing free government-issued documents and clearances for a better chance at landing a job for them."

The DOLE explained that IRR main features the responsibilities of the village officials and other heads of the government agencies in the implementation of the law.

"The IRR highlights the

Duterte, meanwhile, said he will leave it to the Office of the Ombudsman to file charges against the implicated BOC personnel.

"That is not my discretion. The Ombudsman is the prosecutor sa mga taga-gobyerno (of those in the government) who are facing charges," Duterte said.

The Chief Executive also joked about asking the relieved BOC personnel to help him craft rules on how to prevent government personnel from stealing from the country.

"My rule is that help me craft a new implementing rule of how not to rob a country properly. So I will be asking them to report here and from the sources that I have commissioned, akin lang (just me), I would have cut down corruption by a third or one half," Duterte said. (PNA)

role of every barangay in the issuance of barangay certification for first-time job seekers, the Department of Communications and Technology (DICT) for the provision of technology information and database, the DOLE to head the Interagency Monitoring Committee and all other agencies in a one-country-team approached, to report to one another in the implementation and enforcement of this Act," Aragon said.

With this, Bello noted that qualified as "first-time" jobseekers are fresh graduates, out-of-school youths, and others that can secure barangay certification that they are applying for jobs for the first time.

"Regardless of their age, young or old, as long as they are first-time jobseekers. They just need to secure barangay certification from their barangays and they can already avail the benefits," he said in an interview.

## New Dengvaxia raps filed vs. ex-DOH chief Garin

**MANILA** -- Another batch of criminal complaints has been filed before the Department of Justice (DOJ) against former Health Secretary Janette Garin over the deaths of six more children who reportedly died of complications arising after being immunized with dengue vaccine Dengvaxia.

The families of Angela Palubarit, 11; Maricel Manriza, 12; John Marky Ferrer, 11; Charmel Flordeliz, 10; Jonell Dacquell, 13 and Kenchie Ocfemia, 11 were assisted by Public Attorney's Office (PAO) Chief Persida Rueda-Acosta in filing the cases.

"We completed 142 forensic autopsies," Acosta told the media, adding that 98 more cases are to be added to the total of 44 complaints which have been filed before the DOJ.

A total of 32 complaints, which comprised the first, second and third batches of cases, are on the preliminary investigation stage at the DOJ.

A panel of prosecutors, chaired by Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Arnold Magpantay, recently concluded the preliminary investigation of the third batch of complaints.

The charges are for reckless imprudence resulting to homicide under Article 365 of the Revised Penal Code; torture resulting in the death of a person and torture committed against children under Republic Act 9745, the Anti-Torture Act of 2009; and for violating RA 7394, the Consumer Act of the Philippines, particularly, the mislabeling of drugs and devices, liability for defective products, and liability for product and service imperfection.

Aside from health officials, also named in the charge sheet are officials of pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors of the vaccine. (PNA)