

# CA clears Junjun Binay in parking building raps

**MANILA** -- The Court of Appeals (CA) has cleared former Makati City Mayor Jejomar Erwin “Junjun” Binay, Jr. of administrative liabilities over alleged anomalies in the construction of the PHP2.28-billion Makati City Hall Parking Building II (MCHPB).

In a resolution dated March 18, 2019 by Associate Justice Edwin Sorongon, the CA's Former Tenth Division turned down the motion for partial reconsideration filed by the Office of the Ombudsman citing its failure to raise new arguments.

In its original decision on the case issued last year, the CA nullified the joint decision issued by the Office of the Ombudsman on Sept. 7, 2015

against Binay and several other officials.

The CA, in sustaining its earlier ruling, said the Ombudsman erred in ordering Binay's dismissal since the condonation doctrine should have been applied in his case, which states that an erring official is considered to have already been forgiven for acts in his past term if he is reelected.

“While it is true that the Supreme Court's ruling in the case of Carpio-Morales was indeed relative to this Court's issuance of injunctive reliefs and was not about the OMB's main findings of administrative guilt against Binay, Jr. it cannot be negated that the abandonment of the condonation doctrine -- de-

clared prospective in application by no less than the Supreme Court -- should not be given any retroactive effect as to the prejudice Binay, Jr. for the acts he allegedly committed when said doctrine was still in effect and duly recognized,” the CA ruling said.

The CA sustained the dismissal order issued by the Ombudsman on other respondents, namely City Legal Officer Pio Kenneth Dasal, City Budget Officer Lorenza Amores, Civil Engineer of the Central Planning Management Office (CPMO) Arnel Cadangan, CPMO chief Line dela Pena, City Legal Officer Giovanni Condes, Technical Working Group (TWG) officer Rodel Nayve,

General Services Department staff Norma Flores, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) member Ulysses Orienza, CPMO staff Connie Consulta, BAC secretariat Manolito Uyaco and BAC member Gerardo San Gabriel.

The Ombudsman, in its resolution, found Binay, along with 19 other city officials, guilty of serious dishonesty and grave misconduct for the irregularities committed for alleged overpricing in the procurement of the architectural design and engineering services and construction of Phases

# 3 more underage OFWs intercepted at NAIA

**MANILA** -- Three more underage women recruited to work abroad were intercepted by Bureau of Immigration (BI) officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

According to BI port operations division chief Grifon Medina, they were apprehended while they were about to board a Gulf Air flight to Saudi Arabia last Sunday.

I to V of the Makati City Hall Parking Building.

The Ombudsman, in the same decision, ordered the dismissal of Binay and his co-accused from service.

The CA noted that the alleged irregulari-

ties in Phase III to V of the MCHPB which was the basis of serious dishonesty and grave misconduct filed against Binay before the Ombudsman transpired prior to his election in 2013. (PNA)

“They all presented passports with false birthdates to make it appear that they met the age requirement for household service workers, which is 23 years and above,” he said in a statement Thursday.

The names of the passengers were withheld due to a prohibition in the anti-trafficking law against publicly disclosing the identi-

ties of trafficking victims.

Medina said the women have been turned over to the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) for further investigation.

On the other hand, head supervisor Glenn Ford Comia, BI Travel Control and Enforcement Unit (TCEU) at NAIA 1, noted that two of the women alleged that they are 24 and 25 years of age, when they are both 22 years old, while the other one claimed to be 24 years old but is only 20.

He added that the victims have presented valid overseas employment certificates, job contracts and working visas.

Last week, BI officers in the terminal intercepted a 21-year-old female disguised as a 25-year-old, who was also bound for abroad.

BI Commissioner Jaime Morente earlier ordered stricter screening of all departing OFWs to make sure that they are old enough to land a job overseas.

“These underage women are prone to abuse and exploitation in foreign lands, and are being victimized by syndicates exploiting them,” he said. (PNA)

visit.

Empedrad said Korolyov's visit is the reciprocation of his visit to Russia last year. (PNA)

# BJMP, BFP ink pact to ensure ‘fire-resilient’ jails

**MANILA** -- The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has partnered with the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) to ensure the safety and fire resiliency of all city, district and municipal jails nationwide.

In a memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed on Tuesday, BJMP and BFP agreed to provide safer jail facilities and well-informed and capable jail personnel.

“We cannot accomplish our duties as jail officers if we fail to ensure that our detention facilities are fire-resilient thus we need the invaluable assistance of the Fire Service in keeping our jails fire-proof and secured for our PDL,” BJMP chief Jail Director Deogracias Tapayan said in a statement.

Tapayan said the partnership aims not

only to prevent jail facilities from destructive fires but also to guarantee the safety and security of persons deprived of liberty (PDL).

“With the increasing jail population and overcrowding issues, there is also an increase in the number of detention facilities being built thereby it is important to emphasize the need to make every facility compliant with the fire standards implemented by the Fire Bureau,” he said.

Under the MOA, the BFP shall firm up a complete program for periodic fire safety inspection of all BJMP-manned jails and conduct a simultaneous inspection of the same facilities during the annual security assessment by the BJMP to ensure compliance to Republic Act 9514 or the Revised Fire Code of

the Philippines.

The agreement also provides that the BFP, through its city and municipal fire marshals, shall coordinate with concerned city, district or municipal jail wardens to ensure that jails within the locality undergo fire safety inspection.

The BFP shall also conduct lectures and seminars on fire safety measures as well as workshops and fire drills to jail personnel to further educate them on recognizing structures, installations, materials and or devices in jail facilities that are substandard or non-compliant with the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Fire Code.

“The BFP is ready to work with our colleagues in the BJMP. We are honored for the trust and confidence

**MANILA** -- Russian and Filipino naval cooperation is expected to get a much-needed boost as both nations are set to sign a naval cooperation agreement in July.

This was bared by Philippine Navy (PN) flag-officer-in-commander Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad in an interview with reporters Thursday.

He said the initial agreement is already finalized and that they will forward it to the Department of National Defense (DND) for approval.

Once the DND gives its approval, Empedrad

that our partners in public service are giving us in attaining our common goal of saving the lives of our fellowmen,” BFP chief Fire Director Leonard Bañago said.

Bañago underscored the importance and consideration of the fire code requirements in designing and constructing jail facilities to deliver more and provide better jail management services. (PNA)

said they will go to Russia to sign the agreement, which is expected to strengthen the relationship of the two countries.

Last Wednesday, Russian Navy Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Vladimir I. Korolyov, was accorded arrival honors during his visit to the PN headquarters at the Naval Station Jose Andrada, Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

He was then conferred the Honorary Flag Rank Command Badge and Plaque at the Hall of Flags followed by the PN orga-

nizational briefing.

Korolyov and members of his staff arrived in the country last March 18 as official guests of the PN.

His visit officially started with a wreath-laying at the Rizal Monument in Luneta, cultural tour in Intramuros, Manila and a visit to the PN vessel BRP Tarlac (LD-601).

Korolyov is scheduled to pay a courtesy call on AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Benjamin Madrigal and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, and tour Corregidor Island during his four-day

# Sayyaf in Sulu standoff undergoes inquest

**MANILA** - A self-confessed member of the renegade Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) who was among those who fought off the military during government operations to rescue Malaysian hostages last March 15 underwent inquest proceedings Thursday at the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Karah Musa Salapuddin a.k.a. Cesar, 49, of Tungkil, Jolo, Sulu, was presented by law enforcement officials led by

Sgt. Roliver Pascua of Intelligence Service Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) before Assistant State Prosecutor Ethel Rea G. Suril at the DOJ.

Charges of frustrated multiple murder and illegal possession were filed against Salapuddin for his alleged involvement in the incident in Banguingui, Sulu.

A preliminary investigation was ordered on the case by the prosecutor on

March 28.

Two members of the Philippine Marines were wounded and about 500 residents were forced to flee during operations on the island in Banguingui, Sulu where the ASG, led by sub leader Salip Mura, reportedly held two Malaysian nationals in captivity.

The encounter resulted in the wounding of Marine soldiers Corporal Syrus Valenzuela and Private Jude Louiss B Nabal-an. (PNA)