

GMA, Inquirer.net execs face tax evasion raps

MANILA -- Revenue officials on Thursday filed criminal tax evasion charges before the Department of Justice (DOJ) against eleven corporations, including the now-defunct internet publishing firm INQ7 Interactive Inc.

Named as respondents in the complaint against GMA and Inquirer are GMA chairman and chief executive officer Felipe Gozon and Inquirer.net president Paolo Prieto.

"These cases went through usual procedures and nevertheless they did not pay the taxes. Now the taxes have become due and demandable and the failure to pay the due and demandable taxes are crimes under the tax court hence the filing of these cases," Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Assistant Commissioner James H. Roldan explained to newsmen.

BIR Deputy Com-

missioner Marissa O. Cabreros, meanwhile, urged the public and officials of corporations concerned to avoid a similar predicament by availing of the BIR's amnesty program for tax delinquents which will remain in effect until April.

Cabreros described INQ7 Interactive Inc. to be "a domestic corporation primarily engaged in internet publishing and together with its responsible corporate officer, it is being sued for a total tax deficiency liability for taxable year 2006 amounting to PHP23,479,467.13, inclusive of increments," she said.

In its complaint, the BIR accused the respondents of willful failure to pay taxes in violation of Section 255 in relation to 253 (d) and 256 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997.

In February 2001, the two media firms

launched INQ7 which served as a joint platform for their content. Its main business offers text, images, audio, video and online interactive information tools such as discussion boards, polls, and searchable news archives.

In 2006, the portal was dissolved as the two media giants ended their partnership and decided to establish their own news websites.

Aside from INQ7, BIR's Makati City office said the 10 other respondents area Ski Construction Group, Inc.; Prestige Cars Makati, Inc.; Lucky Charm Pub and Restaurant Corp.; Underground Logic, Inc.; JP Med Asian Pacific, Inc.; Information Products Corp.; Tridem Asia Publishing, Inc.; Integrated Dynamic Service, Inc.; Calcarries International, Inc.; and Eurobrokers International, Inc. (PNA)

AFP chief calls on PMA cadets to adopt 'Code of Leadership'

MANILA -- Newly appointed Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief-of-Staff, Lt. Gen. Noel Clement, on Tuesday urged Philippine Military Academy (PMA) cadets to adopt the 'Code of Leadership', which stipulates that they will not tolerate any acts of maltreatment.

"Do not be afraid to speak amid injustice, just like the Honor Code: You do not lie, cheat steal or tolerate among those who do. I encourage you to also adopt a Code of Leadership, that you do not

maltreat nor tolerate among yourselves who do," Clement said in his speech during the PMA change of command ceremony, which was forwarded to defense reporters.

Once cadets have complied with those two codes, the AFP chief said Filipinos, from all walks of life, will be able to sleep well at night knowing that the country is in good hands.

Clement said the mindset stating that stress and pressure make a "snappy cadet" should be cast aside,

adding that being a good soldier and a leader requires more than endurance and tolerance of pain.

"Rather, the yardstick we must employ is one that is anchored on principle, sense of justice, and love of and service to our country and our fellow Filipinos. Let these be the measures by which you gauge yourselves. Lookout and care for each other," he said.

During the change of command ceremony in Fort Gregorio Del Pilar, Baguio City, Rear Admiral Allan Cusi replaced

Lt. Gen. Ronnie Evangelista as PMA acting superintendent.

Evangelista stepped down from his post in the wake of the alleged maltreatment death of Cadet Fourth Class Darwin Dormitorio last September 18.

Aside from Evangelista, Corps of Cadet Commandant, Brig. Gen. Bartolome Vicente Bacarro also resigned from his post. He was replaced by Marawi crisis veteran, Brig. Gen. Romeo Brawner, in an acting capacity last week. (PNA)

PCOO chief urges gov't agencies to aid Star City, MBC personnel

MANILA -- Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Secretary Martin Andanar on Wednesday called on government agencies to provide assistance to employees of Star City and the Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC) after their compound in Pasay City was hit by a fire early Wednesday.

"We at the PCOO are equally saddened by how this will affect the employ-

ees of the MBC and the theme park. We trust that the authorities will work hard to determine the cause of the fire and call on concerned government agencies to extend any form of assistance to those affected by the fire," Andanar said in a statement.

"It is a sad day for broadcasting as the recent fire in Star City has badly damaged the office of the Manila Broadcasting Company and has affected the operations of DZRH, the oldest radio station in the country," he said.

"We look forward to DZRH going back on-air as soon as possible and to the recovery of everyone affected," he added.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo also expressed grief over the incident which he described as "unfortunate news."

He said the damage would take a toll not just on families, especially kids, who visit the amusement park during Christmas but also media personnel whose building was also gutted by the blaze.

"As we near Christmas, this is truly sad news knowing that Star City is a place where Filipino families visit to celebrate the Yuletide season," Panelo

said.

"To our friends in the media who are affected, we wish to let them know that we are one with them in this tragic incident," he added.

The MBC radio and TV broadcast building is also where AM station DZRH and FM stations -- Love Radio, Yes The Best and Easy Rock -- are housed.

Reports showed that the fire started 12:22 a.m. and damaged 80 percent

of the park's main building. The fire was put out at 4:30 a.m.

There were no casualties.

Star City spokesperson Rudolph Jularbal said that the park might reopen in October 2020.

In a statement, MBC said its FM stations will continue regular broadcasting operations while DZRH is expected to go back on-air within 48 hours or less. (PNA)

Marcos asks gov't to accelerate land titling in Marawi

MANILA -- Senator Imee Marcos on Thursday urged the government to speed up the titling of lands for displaced residents of Marawi City to address the delay in the rehabilitation of the war-torn city.

Marcos said she particularly asked defense officials for a comprehensive plan beyond clearing Marawi of unexploded ordnances and debris by the end of October.

She said her Senate Bill 410 proposes to give government lands, including a portion of military reservation areas, to Marawi evacuees who fled the 2017 terrorist siege.

"Habang nakatiwangwang ang siyudad eh nawawalang gana at nadidismaya ang mga kapatid nating Muslim (Our Muslim brothers are becoming disappointed, as the city continues to lay bare)," Marcos said.

The bill also seeks to replace the provisional Task Force Bangon Marawi with a long-term Bangon Marawi Council that would be chaired by the President.

Under the proposal, the President can declare that military reservation areas are no longer necessary for military use and that government land can be sold or awarded.

The senator said rebuilding a ruined city may call for a new location.

250 erring cops face raps: IMEG

MANILA -- As part of its internal cleansing program, the Integrity Monitoring and Enforcement Group (IMEG), the anti-scalawag unit of the Philippine National Police (PNP), has already filed cases against 250 erring cops.

Based on the data of IMEG from February 2017 up to September 11, 2019 released Thursday, the group has filed criminal complaints against 124 arrested PNP personnel involving 10 Police Commissioned Officers (PCOs), 113 Police Non-Commissioned Officers (PNCOs) and one Non-Uniformed Personnel (NUP).

Meanwhile, 126 complaints filed through regular filing were referred to the Department of Justice (DOJ) against 13 PCOs and 113 PNCOs.

Out of 101 cops facing administrative cases

resolved by the Internal Affairs Service (IAS), 65 were dismissed from the service, five were suspended from their work, two were exonerated, four were demoted in rank and 25 were considered case dismissed or closed.

Most of the erring cops who were arrested have the ranks of patrolman, corporal and staff sergeant.

Aside from 250 cops facing cases, 224 personnel from other law enforcement agencies are also facing charges filed by IMEG.

Earlier, PNP chief Gen. Oscar Albayalde said the newly formed enforcement group replaces the two-year-old Counter-Intelligence Task Force (CITF), and was designed to conduct intelligence buildup and law enforcement operations against PNP personnel who are involved in illegal activities, such as drug and human

trafficking, financial crimes, cybercrime, malversation, graft and corrupt practices, and security violations.

IMEG is the primary unit for information gathering and conduct of offensive operations against erring police personnel.

He said the commander of the now-defunct CITF, Col. Romeo Caramat, will serve as the functional authority of the group with 306 uniformed personnel, consisting of 55 commissioned officers and 251 non-commissioned officers.

"The PNP's internal cleansing will be relentless and will continue on until all rogue cops especially those involved in illegal drugs will be weeded out from the service and charged in court," Albayalde said.

Albayalde said the PNP supports the