

HEIRS OF EMILIANO GALA, LUISMIL DE VILLA GALA, PURITA GALA PERDICES, CONCEPCION GALA SALES, CAYO DE VILLA GALA AND AIDA GALA SIU, PETITIONERS, VS. BUKLURAN NG MAMAYAN NG CONCEPC...

Ponente: DICDICAN, J.

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DICDICAN, J.:

This has reference to the petition filed in this Court for review of the decision rendered by the Office of the President of the Philippines on May 12, 2014 in O.P. Case No. 09-C-120 affirming the resolution of DAR Secretary Nasser C. Pangandaman on February 19, 2009 in DARCO Order No. EXC(MR)-0902-035, Series of 2009, denying the application for exemption from CARP coverage, and the subsequent motion for reconsideration, filed by the petitioners.

We made a judicious scrutiny of the petition and the decision and resolution of the Office of the President of the Philippines as well as the Order and Resolution of the DAR Secretary, and we have come up with a finding that the said petition for review is patently without merit. As we know, it is well-entrenched in our jurisdiction and jurisprudence that findings of administrative agencies, such as the Office of the President and the Department of Agrarian Reform, in their fields of specialized expertise are entitled to the highest respect and will not be disturbed by us unless there is a clear and indubitable showing that they overlooked, misunderstood or misapplied some facts or circumstances of weight and substance. In the case at bench, there is no satisfactory or adequate showing by the petitioners that the Office of the President of the Philippines and the Department of Agrarian Reform acted erroneously or with abuse of discretion in rendering or promulgating the decisions, resolutions and orders sought to be reviewed. On the other hand, it appears that the Office of the President and the Department of Agrarian Reform acted correctly and in accordance with law in what they did. As aptly stated by the Office of the President of the Philippines, the DAR Secretary has exclusive jurisdiction to classify and identify landholdings for coverage, like the case for application for exemption therefrom, is strictly part of the administrative implementation of the CARP, a matter well within the competence of the DAR Secretary (*Lakeview Golf and Country Club, Inc. vs. Luzvimin Samahang Nayon, et al.*, G.R. No. 171253, April 16, 2009).

Pursuant to Section 50 of Republic Act No. 6657, or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, the DAR Secretary is vested with the power to determine whether a property is subject to CARP. It is explicitly provided under Section 1, Rule II of the Department of Agrarian Reform Adjudication Board Revised Rules that matters, involving strictly the administrative implementation of the CARP and other agrarian laws and regulations, shall be the exclusive prerogative of and cognizable by the DAR Secretary.

The contentions raised in the instant petition merely reiterated matters which were already discussed and passed upon by the Office of the President of the Philippines. It is settled that factual findings of administrative agencies are generally accorded respect and even finality by this Secretary of DAR, who, by reason of his official position, has acquired expertise in specific matters within his jurisdiction, deserve full respect and, without justifiable reason, ought not to be altered, modified, or reversed. (*DAR v. Samson*, G.R. 161910 and 161930, 17 June 2008).

WHEREFORE, in view of the foregoing premises, we hereby DISMISS outright the petition filed in this case.

SO ORDERED.

Ybañez, and Paredes, JJ., concur.

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