

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES, PLAINTIFF-APPELLEE, VS. FERNANDO GUTIERREZ Y GATSO, ACCUSED-APPELLANT.

G.R. No. 177777. December 04, 2009

Ponente: VELASCO JR., J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-177777/>

VELASCO JR., J.:

On appeal is the Decision[1] dated January 22, 2007 of the Court of Appeals (CA) in CA-G.R. CR-H.C. No. 01688, affirming the decision in Criminal Case No. 12318 of the Regional Trial Court (RTC), Branch 65 in Tarlac City. The RTC found accused-appellant Fernando Gutierrez guilty of the crime of illegal possession of dangerous drugs punishable under Section 11, Article II of Republic Act No. (RA) 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

An Amended Information[2] charged accused-appellant Fernando with violation of Sec. 11, Art. II of RA 9165, allegedly committed as follows:

That on or about September 12, 2002 at around 4:45 o'clock in the afternoon at Purok Jasmin, Poblacion North, Municipality of Ramos, Province of Tarlac, Philippines and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, did then and there willfully, unlawfully and feloniously possess two (2) small plastic [sachets] containing white crystalline substance weighing more or less 14.052 grams of shabu.

Contrary to law.

Arraigned on December 12, 2002, Fernando, assisted by counsel de officio, entered a plea of "not guilty." After pre-trial, trial on the merits ensued.

To substantiate the accusation, the prosecution presented the testimonies of the arresting police officers. Offered in evidence too was Exhibit "B," captioned Chemistry Report No. D-186-2002 and prepared and signed by Ma. Luisa G. David, forensic chemist of the Tarlac Provincial Crime Laboratory Office. Exhibit "B" contains the following entries, among others: the precise time and date the specimen confiscated from Fernando was submitted for examination by the requesting party, the time and date of the examination's completion, and the results of the examination.

Culled from the challenged CA decision, the People's version of the incident is synthesized as follows:

At around 4:45 p.m. on September 12, 2002, the police station of Ramos, Tarlac acting on a tip regarding a shabu transaction (drug-pushing) taking place somewhere in Purok Jasmin, Poblacion Norte, dispatched a three-man team composed of PO3 Romeo Credo, P/Insp. Napoleon Dumlao, and SPO1 Restituto Fernandez to the place mentioned. Arriving at the target area, the three noticed Fernando and one Dennis Cortez under a santol tree handing plastic sachets containing white crystalline substance to certain individuals. At the sight of the police officers, Fernando and the others scampered in different directions. After a brief chase, however, one of the three police operatives caught up with and apprehended Fernando, then carrying a bag.

When searched in the presence of the barangay captain of Poblacion Norte, the bag yielded the following, among

other items: plastic sachets containing white crystalline substance weighing 15 grams or less, one small plastic sachet/bag containing white powdered substance, one set of pipe tooter tube glass, one laptop computer, one Motorola cell phone, one rolled aluminum foil, three bundles of plastic used for repacking, one weighing scale, a Metrobank deposit slip in the name of Dhen Bito, and cash amounting to PhP 1,500 in different denominations. Forthwith, Fernando and the seized items were brought to the Ramos police station and the corresponding request for examination was then prepared. The following day, the confiscated sachets were sent to and received by the Tarlac Provincial Crime Laboratory Field Office. When subjected to qualitative examination, the substances in the plastic sachets and plastic bags were found positive for methamphetamine hydrochloride.

For its part, the defense offered in evidence the sole testimony of Fernando. His defense relied on denial and alleged fabrication of the charge by the police, thus:

At around 4:35 in the afternoon of September 12, 2002, while at home in Anao, Tarlac resting, Fernando was asked by a neighbor, Cortez, to accompany him to Ramos, Tarlac to buy a duck. At that time, Cortez had with him a backpack, the contents of which Fernando knew nothing about.

In Ramos, Tarlac, the two, after buying a duck, repaired to a house whose owner was not known to Fernando. Cortez went inside the house with his backpack, leaving Fernando outside the front yard. Not long thereafter, the police arrived, fired a warning shot, and went inside the house. After a while, the policemen emerged from the house accompanied by two individuals who pointed to Fernando as Cortez's companion, a fact Fernando readily admitted. The policemen then proceeded to arrest Fernando on the pretext he and Cortez were earlier peddling shabu in the town of Paniqui. As they were not able to apprehend Cortez, the arresting officers had Fernando hold and admit ownership of Cortez's backpack earlier taken from inside the house. Fernando denied ownership of the backpack that contained items belonging to Cortez, such as but not limited to the cell phone, laptop computer, driver's license, and wallet. A bank book and Metrobank deposit slip signed by Cortez were also inside the bag.

The Ruling of the RTC and CA

After due proceedings, the RTC, invoking, among other things, the presumptive regularity in the performance of official duties, rendered, on September 1, 2005, its judgment[3] finding Fernando guilty beyond reasonable doubt of possession of 14.052 grams of the prohibited drug, methamphetamine hydrochloride, commonly known as shabu. The fallo reads:

WHEREFORE, the prosecution having proven the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt, the court hereby sentences him to suffer the penalty of life imprisonment, to pay the fine of P400,000.00 and to pay the costs.

The Tarlac Provincial Crime Laboratory who has custody of the 14.052 grams of shabu, subject of this case is hereby ordered to transmit the same to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency for proper disposition and furnish the court proof of compliance.

SO ORDERED.

Therefrom, Fernando went on appeal to the CA, docketed as CA-G.R. CR-H.C. No. 01688.

Eventually, the CA issued the assailed decision dated January 22, 2007, affirming that of the trial court, thus:

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the Decision dated September 1, 2005 of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 65 of Tarlac City in Criminal Case No. 12318 finding accused-appellant Fernando Gutierrez y Gatso GUILTY beyond reasonable doubt of violation of Section 11, Rule II of Republic Act No. 9165 or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 is hereby AFFIRMED.

SO ORDERED.[4]

The Issues

Undaunted, Fernando is now with this Court via the present recourse raising the very same assignment of errors he invoked before the CA, thus:

I

THE COURT A QUO ERRED IN GIVING WEIGHT AND CREDENCE TO THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROSECUTION WITNESSES.

II

THE TRIAL COURT ERRED IN FINDING THE ACCUSED-APPELLANT GUILTY BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT FOR VIOLATION OF SECTION 11, ARTICLE II, R.A. NO. 9165.[5]

The foregoing assignment of errors can actually be reduced and summarized to one: the credibility of the testimonies of the three police officers as prosecution witnesses and the weight to be accorded on said parol evidence.

The parties chose not to file any supplemental briefs, maintaining their respective positions and arguments in their briefs filed before the CA.

The Court's Ruling

The appeal is bereft of merit.

In prosecution proceedings involving illegal possession or sale of prohibited drugs, credence is usually accorded the narration of the incident by the prosecution witnesses, especially when they are police officers who are presumed to have performed their duties in a regular manner, unless there be evidence to the contrary. Moreover, in the absence of proof of motive on the part of the police officers to falsely ascribe a serious crime against the accused, the presumption of regularity in the performance of official duty, as well as the trial court's assessment on the credibility of the apprehending officers, shall prevail over the accused's self-serving and uncorroborated claim of frame-up.[6]

In the case at bench, there is nothing in the records that would dictate a departure from the above doctrinal rule as far as the testimonies of prosecution witnesses PO3 Credo, SPO1 Fernandez, and P/Insp. Dumlao are concerned. We see no valid reason, in fine, to discredit the veracity of their narration. And as aptly noted by the trial court, there is no evidence of any ill motive on the part of the police officers who merely responded to a tip about a drug-pushing incident in their area.

The prosecution's evidence established the fact that a bona fide follow-up operation was undertaken following a phone call, reporting some drug-pushing activities in Poblacion Norte. To recall, PO3 Credo, SPO1 Fernandez, and P/Insp. Dumlao, Chief of the Ramos police station, made up the team that proceeded to the reported area to check the veracity of the drug-related call. Upon reaching the target site, they espied Fernando passing sachets of white crystalline substance. And Fernando, upon noticing the arrival of policemen, lost no time in fleeing from the scene. PO3 Credo gave chase and eventually collared the bag-carrying Fernando and conducted an immediate search on the bag. The search led to the discovery of two sachets and one small plastic bag containing suspicious-looking crystalline substance and drug paraphernalia, among other items.

Thereafter, the police team brought Fernando to the Ramos police station and a request was immediately made for the examination of the seized items. After laboratory examination, the white crystalline substance contained in the

sachets was found positive for shabu.

Fernando now questions the credibility of the prosecution witnesses and the weight the trial court gave to their narration of events, laying stress on the inconsistencies and/or discrepancies of their respective accounts. The adverted inconsistencies/discrepancies relate to the place where the police initially spotted and apprehended Fernando and where the confiscated bag was searched. Fernando urges the Court to consider: (1) SPO1 Fernandez and P/Insp. Dumlao testified first seeing Fernando and the three others under a santol tree exchanging sachets of drugs, while PO3 Credo testified that they (Fernando and three others) were under a kubo; and (2) PO3 Credo testified that, immediately upon apprehending Fernando, he searched the latter's bag and found the contraband inside. On the other hand, SPO1 Fernandez and P/Insp. Dumlao placed the search as having been effected in the police station in the presence of the barangay captain of Poblacion Norte.

The inconsistencies Fernando cited relate to extraneous matters that do not in any way affect the material points of the crime charged. The seeming inconsistency with regard to where Fernando and Cortez exactly were when the sachets of shabu changed hands--be they in a kubo, as PO3 Credo mentioned,[7] or under a santol tree, as SPO3 Fernandez[8] and P/Insp. Dumlao[9] asserted--is of little moment and hardly of any bearing on the central fact of the commission of the crime. In context, the more important occurrence relates to Fernando and his companions scampering in different directions when the policemen chanced upon them, and that Fernando, when apprehended, was holding a bag which contained shabu and drug paraphernalia--facts categorically confirmed by the prosecution witnesses. It is perhaps too much to hope that different eyewitnesses shall give, at all times, testimonies that are in all fours with the realities on the ground. Minor discrepancies in their testimonies are in fact to be expected; they neither vitiate the essential integrity of the evidence in its material entirety nor reflect adversely on the credibility of witnesses. Inconsistencies deflect suspicions that the testimony is rehearsed or concocted. And as jurisprudence teaches, honest differing accounts on minor and trivial matters serve to strengthen rather than destroy the credibility of a witness to a crime.[10]

We took pains in reviewing the transcript of stenographic notes taken during the trial and found nothing to support Fernando's allegations of inconsistencies between or among the prosecution witnesses' versions of relevant events. For instance, PO3 Credo testified that, after arresting Fernando, he immediately searched the bag the latter was carrying.[11] This account does not contradict the testimonies of SPO3 Fernandez[12] and P/Insp. Dumlao,[13] who both recounted the search made in the police station in the presence of a barangay captain. As earlier indicated, it was PO3 Credo who arrested Fernando[14] and had the opportunity to make the search at the scene of the crime.

On the other hand, SPO3 Fernandez and P/Insp. Dumlao ran after Cortez and the two others, eventually arresting Cortez, who was initially included in the original Information.[15] What is fairly deducible from the testimonies of the arresting operatives is that there were two separate searches actually made: (1) the first done by PO3 Credo immediately after he arrested Fernando which is the usual and standard police practice; and (2) a subsequent one effected at the police station where the bag was apparently marked and its contents inventoried.

The Court notes that immediately after his arrest, Cortez was also searched but no illegal drugs were found in his person. It was obviously for this reason that after the original Information was filed following an inquest, Fernando and Cortez filed a joint Motion for Preliminary Investigation and/or Re-Investigation.[16] The preliminary investigation resulted in the filing of the Amended Information that dropped Cortez as accused paving the way for the dismissal of the charge against him, but retained Fernando as the sole accused in Criminal Case No. 12318.

To reiterate a long-settled rule, the Court will not disturb the trial court's evaluation of the credibility of witnesses,

save when it had overlooked, misunderstood, or misapplied some facts or circumstances of weight and substance which, when considered, will alter the assailed decision or affect the result of the case.[17] None of the exceptions obtain in the case at bar.

At the trial, Fernando invoked the defenses of denial and frame-up, claiming at every opportunity that the bag containing the shabu sachets and drug paraphernalia belonged to Cortez, not to him, as the arresting officers would make it appear. To prove this point, Fernando testified that among the items found in the bag were Cortez's driver's license and wallet.

The defense thus put up deserves scant consideration, because, off-hand, it stands uncorroborated. Fernando, as may be noted, failed to present the owner of the house where he and Cortez supposedly went to and where he allegedly was when arrested, to substantiate his posture about Cortez being really owning the bag. Certainly, Fernando had the right to compel the appearance of persons who he believes can support his defense, but for reasons known only to Fernando, he did not secure the appearance of the person who could have plausibly lent credence to his claim of frame-up. As we have time and again held, the defense of denial or frame-up, like alibi, has been invariably viewed with disfavor for it can easily be concocted and is a common defense ploy in most prosecutions for violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act.

Here, no clear and convincing evidence was adduced to prove Fernando's defense of denial or frame-up. On the contrary, Fernando's action while the policemen were undertaking follow-up operations was what took him behind the bars. The reference, of course, is to the fact that Fernando hastily fled from the scene of the crime upon noticing the arrival of the police at the target area.

Fernando's allegation that the bag the police seized contained Cortez's driver's license and wallet--a futile attempt to avoid culpability over his possession of the bag--will not save the day for him. First, his assertion on what the bag contained is belied by the Joint Affidavit[18] of the three apprehending officers. It was stated under paragraph 5 of their joint affidavit that the items found in the bag had been duly inventoried. The items enumerated clearly did not include any wallet or driver's license of Cortez. Since said joint affidavit was used in the inquest to indict Fernando and Cortez, the inventoried items would have included the license and wallet adverted to, the search of the bag conducted in the police station having been made in the presence of the barangay captain of Poblacion Norte.

Second, it bears to stress that Fernando was indicted for illegal possession of dangerous drugs. In the prosecution of this offense, the ownership of the bag where the shabu and drug paraphernalia were found is really inconsequential. The elements necessary for the prosecution of illegal possession of dangerous drugs are: (1) the accused is in possession of an item or object which is identified to be a prohibited drug; (2) such possession is not authorized by law; and (3) the accused freely and consciously possessed the said drug.[19] Elucidating on the nature of this offense, the Court in *People v. Tira* wrote:

x x x This crime is *mala prohibita*, and, as such, criminal intent is not an essential element. However, the prosecution must prove that the accused had the intent to possess (*animus possidendi*) the drugs. Possession, under the law, includes not only actual possession, but also constructive possession. Actual possession exists when the drug is in the immediate physical possession or control of the accused. On the other hand, constructive possession exists when the drug is under the dominion and control of the accused or when he has the right to exercise dominion and control over the place where it is found. Exclusive possession or control is not necessary. The accused cannot avoid conviction if his right to exercise control and dominion over the place where the contraband is located, is shared with another.[20] (Emphasis ours.)

Without a trace of equivocation, the RTC and later the CA held that the prosecution had discharged the burden of proving all the elements of the crime charged. Since Fernando was caught carrying the incriminating bag after the

police had been tipped off of drug pushing in the target area, any suggestion that he was not in actual possession or control of the prohibited drug hidden in the area would be puny. Thus, ownership of the bag is truly inconsequential.

We emphasize at this juncture that in no instance did Fernando intimate to the trial court that there were lapses in the safekeeping of the seized items that affected their integrity and evidentiary value. He, thus, veritably admits that the crystalline substance in the sachets found in his bag was the same substance sent for laboratory examination and there positively determined to be shabu and eventually presented in evidence in court as part of the corpus delicti. In other words, Fernando, before the RTC and the CA, opted not to make an issue of whether the chain of custody of the drugs subject of this case has been broken. This disposition on the part of Fernando is deducible from the August 18, 2005 Order[21] of the trial court, pertinently saying, "[The] Acting Provincial Prosecutor x x x and Atty. Emmanuel Abellera, counsel de officio of the accused manifested that the chain of custody of the searched illegal drug or shabu is admitted."

As a mode of authenticating evidence, the chain of custody rule requires that the presentation of the seized prohibited drugs as an exhibit be preceded by evidence sufficient to support a finding that the matter in question is what the proponent claims it to be.[22] This would ideally cover the testimony about every link in the chain, from seizure of the prohibited drug up to the time it is offered in evidence, in such a way that everyone who touched the exhibit would describe how and from whom it was received, to include, as much as possible, a description of the condition in which it was delivered to the next link in the chain.[23]

Given the foregoing considerations, particularly the established fact that the crystalline powder in two sachets the police confiscated from Fernando in the afternoon of September 12, 2002 was shabu, the Court is constrained to affirm the judgment of conviction appealed from.

We find the penalty imposed by the RTC, as affirmed by the CA, to be in accordance with law. As aptly pointed out by the appellate court, Sec. 11, Art. II of RA 9165 pertinently provides:

SEC. 11. Possession of Dangerous Drugs. -- The penalty of life imprisonment to death and a fine ranging from Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) to Ten million pesos (P10,000,000.00) shall be imposed upon any person, who, unless authorized by law, shall possess any dangerous drug in the following quantities, regardless of the degree of purity thereof:

x x x x

(5) 50 grams or more of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu";

x x x x

Otherwise, if the quantity involved is less than the foregoing quantities, the penalties shall be graduated as follows:

(1) Life imprisonment and a fine ranging from Four hundred thousand pesos (P400,000.00) to Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), if the quantity of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu" is ten (10) grams or more but less than fifty (50) grams. (Emphasis supplied.)

Fernando was caught in possession of 14.052 grams of shabu. Applying the law, the proper penalty should be life imprisonment and a fine ranging from PhP 400,000 to PhP 500,000. Hence, Fernando was correctly sentenced to life imprisonment and a fine of PhP 400,000.

WHEREFORE, the appeal of accused-appellant Fernando Gutierrez is hereby DENIED. Accordingly, the January 22, 2007 CA Decision in CA-G.R. CR-H.C. No. 01688 is AFFIRMED.

Costs against accused-appellant.

SO ORDERED.

Chico-Nazario, (Acting Chairperson), Carpio[*], Leonardo-De Castro[**], and Peralta, JJ., concur.

[*] Additional member as per Special Order No. 789 dated November 3, 2009.

[**] Additional member as per raffle dated October 12, 2009.

[1] Rollo, pp. 2-12. Penned by Associate Justice Rodrigo V. Cosico and concurred in by Associate Justices Lucas P. Bersamin (now a member of the Court) and Estela M. Perlas-Bernabe.

[2] Records, pp. 12-13, dated November 5, 2002.

[3] CA rollo, pp. 5-8. Penned by Judge Bitty G. Viliran.

[4] Rollo, p. 11.

[5] CA rollo, p. 22.

[6] Mamangun v. People, G.R. No. 149152, February 2, 2007, 514 SCRA 44; citing People v. Chua, G.R. No. 128046, March 7, 2000, 327 SCRA 335.

[7] TSN, February 18, 2003, p. 3. PO3 Credo testified:

Q When you arrived at Jasmin, Poblacion, Ramos, Tarlac, what happened?

A When we arrived in the place, they were in a hut and when we arrived, they suddenly ran away.

[8] TSN, June 26, 2003, pp. 2 and 5. SPO3 Fernandez testified:

Q Did you go out of the police station?

A Yes sir.

Q Where did you go?

A We received a call and we went to Poblacion Norte, Ramos, Tarlac.

Q What happened?

A We reached someone seated under the santol tree.

Q How many were they?

A Four to five persons sir.

x x x x

Q And they were seated under what kind of tree?

A Santol tree sir.

[9] TSN, May 15, 2003, p. 2. P/Insp. Dumlao testified:

Q Will you describe the place where they were pushing shabu?

A The place sir is under a santol tree, they were there, and we noticed that they ran away when they saw us.

[10] People v. Pateo, G.R. No. 156786, June 3, 2004, 430 SCRA 609, 615.

[11] TSN, February 18, 2003, p. 4. PO3 Credo testified:

Q You said you chased Fernando Gutierrez who was then carrying a bag, were you able to chase him?

A Yes, sir.

Q And what did you do with him when you were able to chase him?

A We searched the bag.

Q And what did you find out?

A Shabu and shabu paraphernalia.

[12] TSN, June 26, 2003, pp. 2-3. SPO3 Fernandez testified:

Q When you saw them transferring a plastic sachet from one another, what did you do?

A They ran away sir.

Q What about you, what did you do?

A We chased them sir and we were able to apprehend Fernando Gutierrez in a small house.

Q What did you find out?

A He was carrying a bag sir.

Q What did you do with the bag?

A We brought it to the police station sir.

Q Did you not open the bag?

A Not yet sir.

Q When did you open it?

A At the police station sir.

Q What did you find out?

A Shabu and shabu paraphernalia sir.

[13] TSN, May 15, 2003, pp. 2-3. P/Insp. Dumlao testified:

Q And so you said that they scampered when they saw the police, what did you do?

A We ran after them.

Q What transpired when you ran after them?

A Fernando Gutierrez and Dennis Cortez were apprehended and were brought to the police station and the bag that they were carrying contains the items listed in the information.

Q From whom did you get the bag?

A From the possession of Fernando Gutierrez sir.

Q What did you do with the bag?

A We inspected the bag.

Q What did you find out?

A Sachet of shabu containing more or less 15 grams.

Q What did you discover from Dennis Cortez?

A Yes sir.

Q What did you discover from Dennis Cortez?

A Nothing sir.

Q What did you do with the items in the bag of Fernando Gutierrez?

A We inventorie[d] the contents in the presence of the barangay captain of Poblacion Norte.

[14] TSN, June 26, 2003, pp. 3 and 6. SPO3 Fernandez testified:

Q Who were your companions in going to Barangay Jasmin?

A Napoleon Dumlao and Romeo Credo sir.

Q And who was the one who chased Fernando Gutierrez?

A Romeo Credo sir.

Q So you and Dumlao were left and it was Credo who ran after the accused in this case.

A Only Credo gave chase sir.

Q So you were not the one who found the bag containing the shabu?

A Yes sir.

x x x x

Q Is it not a fact that Credo was able to apprehend the accused because he chased the accused?

A Yes sir.

Q And when you arrived at the place, Credo already subdued Gutierrez?

A We went there together but only Credo actually arrested him.

[15] Records, pp. 1-2, dated September 13, 2002.

[16] Id. at 15.

[17] People v. Aguilar, G.R. No. 177749, December 17, 2007, 540 SCRA 509, 522.

[18] Records, p. 4, dated September 12, 2002, signed by PO3 Credo, SPO3 Fernandez, and P/Insp. Dumlao.

[19] People v. Pringas, G.R. No. 175928, August 31, 2007, 531 SCRA 828, 846; citing People v. Khor, G.R. No. 126391, May 19, 1999, 307 SCRA 295, 328.

[20] G.R. No. 139615, May 28, 2004, 430 SCRA 134, 151-152.

[21] Records, p. 121.

[22] Id.

[23] Lopez v. People, G.R. No. 172953, April 30, 2008, 553 SCRA 619.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.