

**DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES, PETITIONER, VS.
RONQUILLO, NUMERIANO F., ABANIL, ZENAIDA N., ABEJO,
REYNALDO Y., ABRENICA, ELEUTERIO C., ABUBAKAR, AMIRHUSIN I.,
ADA, MARILY...**

G.R. No. 204948. September 07, 2020

Ponente: GAERLAN, J.

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GAERLAN, J.:

Assailed in this petition for review on certiorari[1] under Rule 45 of the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure are the Decision[2] dated June 6, 2012 and the Resolution[3] dated December 19, 2012 of the Court of Appeals (CA) in CA- G.R. SP. No. 118640 which affirmed with modifications the Decision[4] dated September 22, 2010 of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) of Quezon City, Branch 98 in Special Civil Action No. Q-08-63099 for mandamus.

The Facts

On May 22, 1985, the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) Executive Committee approved Resolution No. 0236 which granted Additional Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) to the bank's officials and employees to be computed as follows:

1. Officials and employees receiving a monthly basic salary of P1,500.00 and below shall be granted a P150.00 per month additional COLA while those receiving a basic salary of P1,501.00 and above shall receive P100.00 additional COLA per month; x x x[5]

On April 13, 1988, the DBP Board of Directors issued Resolution No. 0210 which granted COLA of P200.00 per month to all bank personnel effective January 1, 1988.[6]

On July 1, 1989, the Congress enacted Republic Act (R.A.) No. 6758 otherwise known as the Compensation and Position Classification Act of 1989. Section 12 of the said law provides:

Section 12. Consolidation of Allowances and Compensation. - All allowances, except for representation and transportation allowances; clothing and laundry allowances; subsistence allowance of marine officers and crew on board government vessels and hospital personnel; hazard pay; allowances of foreign service personnel stationed abroad; and such other additional compensation not otherwise specified herein as may be determined by the DBM, shall be deemed included in the standardized salary rates herein prescribed. Such other additional compensation, whether in cash or in kind, being received by incumbents only as of July 1, 1989 not integrated into the standardized salary rates shall continue to be authorized.

Existing additional compensation of any national government official or employee paid from local funds of a local government unit shall be absorbed into the basic salary of said official or employee and shall be paid by the National Government.

For the purpose of implementation of the said law, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issued Corporate Compensation Circular (CCC) No. 10 on October 2, 1989 which discontinued all allowances and fringe

benefits, to wit:

Payment of other allowances/fringe benefits and all other forms of compensation granted on top of basic salary, whether in cash or in kind, x x x shall be discontinued effective 1 November 1989. Payment made for such allowances/fringe benefits after said date shall be considered as illegal disbursements of public funds.[7]

In light of the passage of R.A. No. 6758, implemented by DBP through CCC No. 10, payment of COLA to its officials and employees was discontinued.[8]

On August 12, 1998, the Court en banc, in the case of De Jesus, et al. v. Commission on Audit, et al.[9] declared CCC No. 10 as ineffective and unenforceable because of its lack of publication in either the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.[10]

Sometime in 1999, DBP offered its officers and employees an Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP). Under which, the availing employees were given additional cash benefits called "gratuities" in consideration for their early retirement.[11] Some of the respondents availed of the ERIP and received the gratuities. While some of them either retired under the regular retirement laws, resigned, dismissed from service or were still employed as of May 9, 2003.

On May 9, 2003, DBP issued Resolution No. 0137 which granted COLA to its personnel concerned covering the period of July 1, 1989 to February 28, 1999 to enable all its regular employees to pay off the soft loan granted under the Provident Fund in June 2002.[12]

On November 16, 2005, DBP, through its Executive Committee, issued Resolution No. 0151[13] which granted Amelioration Allowance (AA) to the bank's employees except the retirees or resignees who have executed any document waiving their claims against the bank.[14]

Respondents repeatedly made written and verbal demands to DBP for back payment of COLA and AA.[15]

On June 4, 2008, DBP, through its Chief Legal Counsel, wrote a letter addressed to the counsel of the respondents unequivocally denying their claims.[16]

In July 24, 2008, the respondents filed a petition for writ of mandamus against DBP under Section 3, Rule 65 of the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure to enforce their alleged rights over the back payment of their COLA and AA[17] before the RTC of Quezon City, which was docketed as Special Civil Action No. Q-08-63099.

On September 22, 2010, the RTC rendered its Decision[18] on the petition. It denied and consequently dismissed the petition insofar as the respondents who availed of the ERIP ruling that their quitclaims barred them from claiming for COLA and AA. As for the other respondents, the trial court granted the petition, ruling that the concerned respondents are entitled to COLA and AA, and ordered DBP and its officers to settle and grant their claims and pay legal interest on the differentials, attorney's fees, and cost of suit. The dispositive portion of the Decision reads:

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the instant Petition for Mandamus is hereby DENIED DUE COURSE and is ordered DISMISSED on the part of petitioners who availed of the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP).

Insofar as petitioners Nicolas Alcover, Nelly Ferrolino, Isidro Reyes, Lili Ramirez, Federico Remo, Eleuterio Pabillore, Ma. Cristina Simon and Eduardo Villalon are concerned, their petition is however GRANTED. Consequently, judgment is hereby rendered against respondent Development Bank of the Philippines, its President and Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors and all concerned officers to:

1. Settle and grant the claim for differential pay of the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and Amelioration

Allowance (AA) of the above-named petitioners, beginning November 1, 1989 or from the time it was stopped or disallowed up to the time of said petitioner[s'] respective retirement or separation from DBP;

2. Pay the legal rate of interest on the respective differentials of the above-named petitioners beginning from the time it was ordered disallowed or from the time it was discontinued until fully paid;

3. Pay the amount equivalent to twenty percent (20%) of the claims of the above-named petitioners or in the amount not less than Php20,000.00, as and by way of attorney's fees;

4. Pay the cost of suit.

SO ORDERED.[19]

Both parties filed their separate appeals to the CA. On May 11, 2011, they filed their respective Memoranda.[20]

On January 17, 2012, Isidro Reyes, Lili Ramirez, and Eleuterio Pabillore and DBP filed a partial satisfaction of judgment and joint motion for partial withdrawal of appeal alleging that they have received payment from the bank representing the whole and complete settlement of any and all amounts due and payable, and prayed that their respective appeals be withdrawn for being moot and academic. Later, the CA issued a resolution stating that the motion filed will be resolved simultaneously with the rendition of the decision on the appeal.[21]

On June 6, 2012, the CA promulgated its Decision[22] modifying the ruling of the trial court. It held that the respondents who availed of the ERIP are likewise entitled to COLA and AA. It explained that the COLA and AA were not integrated into the salaries of the employees.[23] Their quitclaims were ruled to be ineffective to bar recovery as quitclaims do not necessarily result in the waiver of their claims.[24] Moreover, the petition was dismissed with respect to the employees who were still employed with DBP as May 9, 2003 for lack of cause of action taking into account DBP Board Resolution No. 0137 which granted them payment of their COLA. The same is true to those still employed with DBP as November 16, 2005, as their AA were paid by virtue of DBP Board Resolution No. 0151. The dispositive portion of its decision reads:

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the petition is GRANTED and the assailed September 22, 2010 Decision is MODIFIED as follows:

1. Appellants who availed of the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP), retired under the regular retirement laws, resigned or was dismissed from service except those appellants falling under paragraph 2 below, are entitled to receive the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and Amelioration Allowance (AA) covering the period November 1, 1989 to February 28, 1999 or date of retirement or separation from service, whichever comes first. Accordingly, Development Bank of the Philippines, its President and Chief Executive Officers and Board of Directors and all concerned officers are ORDERED:

a. To settle the claim of appellants referred above for differential pay covering the stated period.

b. Pay the legal interest of 6% per annum on the respective differential of the appellants from the date of demand on May 22, 2008 up to the time this judgment becomes final and executory. Henceforth, the legal rate of interest shall be 12% per annum until the satisfaction of judgment.

2. The petition for mandamus is hereby ordered DISMISSED with respect to appellants who were still employed with DBP as of May 9, 2003 for lack of cause of action. Said appellants were paid their Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) pursuant to DBP Board Resolution No. 0137. Likewise, the petition for Mandamus is DISMISSED with respect to the claim for Amelioration Allowance (AA) of appellants who were still employed with DBP as of November 16, 2005, it appearing that they were paid the same per DBP Board Resolution No. 0151. Further, the case is ORDERED REMANDED to the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 98 for the purpose of determining who among the appellants were still employed with DBP as of

May 9, 2003 and as of November 16, 2005.

3. AFFIRMED the decision of the court a quo insofar as petitioner Nicolas Alcover, Nelly Ferrolino, Isidro Reyes, Lili Ramirez, Federico Remo, Eleuterio Pabilloro, Ma. Cristina Simon and Eduardo Villalon is concerned.

4. As prayed for by movants, the Release, Quitclaim and Waiver executed by appellants Isidro Reyes, Lili Ramirez, and Eleut[e]rio Pabilloro in favor of DBP shall be treated as partial satisfaction of the judgment. Consequently, with respect to appellants Isidro Reyes, Lili Ramirez, and Eleutorio Pabilloro their case for Mandamus against DBP and the appeal of DBP and the appeal of DBP as against them, are considered CLOSED and TERMINATED.

5. The award of attorney's fee[s] in the amount equivalent to twenty percent (20%) of the claims or in the amount not less than Php20,000.00 and cost of suit are AFFIRMED.

SO ORDERED.[25]

On July 6, 2012, DBP moved for reconsideration of the CA decision which was denied in its Resolution dated December 19, 2012.[26]

Undaunted, DBP filed a petition for review on certiorari under Rule 45 of the Rules of Court averring that the appellate court, in resolving the case, failed to consider the ruling of this Court in the case of Gutierrez, et. al. v. Dep't. of Budget and Mgm't, et al.[27]

The sole issue in this case is whether the respondents are entitled to payment of COLA and AA after the effectivity of Republic Act No. 6758 and Corporate Compensation Circular No. 10.

The Court's Ruling

We grant the petition.

To begin with, this Court has long settled that all kinds of allowances except those specifically enumerated in Section 12 of R.A. No. 6758 are deemed integrated in the standardized salaries of government employees, including those of government-owned and controlled corporations and government financial institutions.

Under R.A. No. 6758, the COLA, as well as the AA, has been integrated into the standardized salary rates of government workers.[28] Therefore, back payment to the former employees of DBP is unauthorized.[29]

In Gutierrez, et al. v. Dep't. of Budget and Mgm't. et al.,[30] this Court exhaustively discussed the same legal issue, to wit:

At the heart of the present controversy is Section 12 of R.A. 6758 which is quoted anew for clarity:

Section 12. Consolidation of Allowances and Compensation. - All allowances, except for representation and transportation allowances; clothing and laundry allowances; subsistence allowance of marine officers and crew on board government vessels and hospital personnel; hazard pay; allowances of foreign service personnel stationed abroad; and such other additional compensation not otherwise specified herein as may be determined by the DBM, shall be deemed included in the standardized salary rates herein prescribed. Such other additional compensation, whether in cash or in kind, being received by incumbents only as of July 1, 1989 not integrated into the standardized salary rates shall continue to be authorized.

As will be noted from the first sentence above, "all allowances" were deemed integrated into the standardized salary rates except the following:

(1) representation and transportation allowances;

- (2) clothing and laundry allowances;
- (3) subsistence allowances of marine officers and crew on board government vessels;
- (4) subsistence allowances of hospital personnel;
- (5) hazard pay;
- (6) allowances of foreign service personnel stationed abroad; and
- (7) such other additional compensation not otherwise specified in Section 12 as may be determined by the DBM.

But, while the provision enumerated certain exclusions, it also authorized the DBM to identify such other additional compensation that may be granted over and above the standardized salary rates. In *Philippine Ports Authority Employees Hired After July 1, 1989 v. Commission on Audit*, the Court has ruled that while Section 12 could be considered self-executing in regard to items (1) to (6), it was not so in regard to item (7). The DBM still needed to amplify item (7) since one cannot simply assume what other allowances were excluded from the standardized salary rates. It was only upon the issuance and effectivity of the corresponding implementing rules and regulations that item (7) could be deemed legally completed. x x x x

In this case, the DBM promulgated NCC 59 [and CCC 10]. But, instead of identifying some of the additional exclusions that Section 12 of R.A. 6758 permits it to make, the DBM made a list of what allowances and benefits are deemed integrated into the standardized salary rates. More specifically, NCC 59 identified the following allowances/additional compensation that are deemed integrated:

- (1)
Cost of Living Allowance (COLA);
- (2)
Inflation connected allowance;
- (3)
Living Allowance;
- (4)
Emergency Allowance;
- (5)
Additional Compensation of Public Health Nurses assigned to public health nursing;
- (6)

Additional Compensation of Rural Health Physicians;

(7)

Additional Compensation of Nurses in Malacañang Clinic;

(8)

Nurses Allowance in the Air Transportation Office;

(9)

Assignment Allowance of School Superintendents;

(10)

Post allowance of Postal Service Office employees;

(11)

Honoraria/allowances which are regularly given except the following:

a.

those for teaching overload;

b.

in lieu of overtime pay;

c.

for employees on detail with task forces/special projects;

d.

researchers, experts and specialists who are acknowledged authorities in their field of specialization;

e.

lecturers and resource persons;

f.

Municipal Treasurers deputized by the Bureau of Internal Revenue to collect and remit internal revenue collections; and

g.

Executive positions in State Universities and Colleges filled by designation from among their faculty members.

12.

Subsistence Allowance of employees except those authorized under EO [Executive Order] 346 and uniformed personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Integrated National Police;

13.

Laundry Allowance of employees except those hospital/ sanitaria personnel who attend directly to patients and who by the nature of their duties are required to wear uniforms, prison guards and uniformed personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Integrated National Police; and

14.

Incentive allowance/fee/pay except those authorized under the General Appropriations Act and Section 33 of P.D. 807.

The drawing up of the above list is consistent with Section 12 above. R.A. 6758 did not prohibit the DBM from identifying for the purpose of implementation what fell into the class of "all allowances." With respect to what employees' benefits fell outside the term apart from those that the law specified, the DBM, said this Court in a case, needed to promulgate rules and regulations identifying those excluded benefits. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that until and unless the DBM issues such rules and regulations, the enumerated exclusions in items (1) to (6) remain exclusive. Thus so, not being an enumerated exclusion, COLA is deemed already incorporated in the standardized salary rates of government employees under the general rule of integration.

In any event, the Court finds the inclusion of COLA in the standardized salary rates proper. In *National Tobacco Administration v. Commission on Audit*, the Court ruled that the enumerated fringe benefits in items (1) to (6) have one thing in common--they belong to one category of privilege called allowances which are usually granted to officials and employees of the government to defray or reimburse the expenses incurred in the performance of their official functions. Consequently, if these allowances are consolidated with the standardized salary rates, then the government official or employee will be compelled to spend his personal funds in attending to his duties. On the other hand, item (7) is a "catch-all proviso" for benefits in the nature of allowances similar to those enumerated.

Clearly, COLA is not in the nature of an allowance intended to reimburse expenses incurred by officials and employees of the government in the performance of their official functions. It is not payment in consideration of the fulfillment of official duty. As defined, cost of living refers to "the level of prices relating to a range of everyday items" or "the cost of purchasing those goods and services which are included in an accepted standard level of consumption." Based on this premise, COLA is a benefit intended to cover increases in the cost of living. Thus, it is and should be integrated into the standardized salary rates.[31](Citations omitted, underscoring supplied)

Certainly, the six non-integrated allowances have clearly omitted the COLA. This is because the COLA is not an allowance that seeks to reimburse expenses incurred in the fulfillment of the government worker's official functions.[32]

This Court reiterated the Gutierrez ruling in the 2012 case of *Abellanos, et al. v. Commission on Audit et al.*,[33] where the payment of incentive benefits or allowances of the employees of the National Housing Authority (NHA) granted by virtue of NHA Board Resolution No. 464 was ruled to have been validly disallowed, to quote:

In this case, the incentive allowances granted under Resolution No. 464 are clearly not among those enumerated under R.A. 6758. Neither has there been any allegation that the allowances were specifically determined by the DBM to be an exception to the standardized salary rates. Hence, such allowances can no longer be granted after the effectivity of R.A. 6758.[34] (Underlining ours)

In 2014, this Court yet again, in *Land Bank of the Philippines v. Naval, Jr.*,[35] resonated the same resolution to the legal issue, thus:

Since the COLA and the BEP are among those expressly excluded by the SSL from integration, they should be considered as deemed integrated in the standardized salaries of LBP employees under the general rule of integration.[36]

Thereafter, in *Maritime Industry Authority v. Commission on Audit*,[37] this Court, in deciding the validity of the grant of allowance and incentives to some officers and employees of petitioner Maritime Industry Authority, said:

The clear policy of Section 12 is "to standardize salary rates among government personnel and do away with multiple allowances and other incentive packages and the resulting differences in compensation among them." Thus, the general rule is that all allowances are deemed included in the standardized salary. x x x[38]

A clarification, however, was provided by this Court as to the granting of allowances or benefits which are not integrated in the standardized salary, to wit:

x x x However, there are allowances that may be given in addition to the standardized salary. These non-integrated allowances are specifically identified in Section 12, x x x.

x x x x

In addition to the non-integrated allowances specified in Section 12, the Department of Budget and Management is delegated the authority to identify other allowances that may be given to government employees in addition to the standardized salary.[39]

These additional non-integrated allowances, however, cannot be granted indiscriminately. Otherwise, the purpose and mandate of R.A. No. 6758 will be defeated.[40] To reiterate, the non-integrated allowances that may be granted in addition to those specifically enumerated in Section 12 of R.A. No. 6758 should be in the nature similar to those enumerated in the provision, that is, they are amounts needed by the employee in the performance of his or her duties.[41]

Under the doctrine of *stare decisis et non quita movere*, a point of law already established will be followed by the court in subsequent cases where the same legal issue is raised.[42] Verily, this Court can come to no other conclusion than to deny the payment of the COLA and AA on top of the respondents' basic salary from July 1, 1989 because: (1) it has not been expressly excluded from the general rule on integration by the first sentence of Sec. 12, R.A. No. 6758; and (2) as explained in *Gutierrez*, the COLA is not granted in order to reimburse employees for the expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.[43]

The respondents argued, in support of their claims for back payment of COLA and AAA, that since the DBM CCC No. 10 was rendered ineffective and unenforceable due to lack of publication in *De Jesus, et al. v. Commission on Audit, et al.*,[44] this resulted in the non-integration of such allowances in the standardized salary. They concluded that they are still entitled to the same.[45]

This Court cannot subscribe to the respondents' contention.

In *Land Bank of the Philippines v. Naval, Jr., et al.*,[46] it was clarified that the nullification of DBM-CCC No. 10 is irrelevant to the validity of the provisions of R.A. No. 6758.[47] We ratiocinated in *NAPOCOR Employees*

Consolidated Union (NECU) v. National Power Corporation[48] that:

We hold that Rep. Act No. 6758 (Compensation and Classification Act of 1989) can be implemented notwithstanding our ruling in *De Jesus vs. Commission on Audit*. While it is true that in said case, this Court declared the nullity of DBM-CCC No. 10, yet there is nothing in our decision thereon suggesting or intimating the suspension of the effectivity of Rep. Act No. 6758 pending the publication in the Official Gazette of DBM-CCC No. 10. For sure, in *Philippine International Trading Corporation vs. Commission on Audit*, this Court specifically ruled that the nullity of DBM-CCC No. 10 will not affect the validity of Rep. Act No. 6758. Says this Court in that case:

x x x The nullity of DBM-CCC No. 10, will not affect the validity of R.A. No. 6758. It is a cardinal rule in statutory construction that statutory provisions control the rules and regulations which may be issued pursuant thereto. Such rules and regulations must be consistent with and must not defeat the purpose of the statute. The validity of R.A. No. 6758 should not be made to depend on the validity of its implementing rules.[49] (Emphasis and underscoring supplied)

Furthermore, action by the DBM is not required to implement Section 12 for the integration of allowances into the standardized salary.[50] Rather, an issuance by the DBM is required only if additional non-integrated allowances will be identified.[51] Without this issuance from the DBM, the enumerated non- integrated allowances in Section 12 remain exclusive.[52]

As held in *Philippine International Trading Corporation v. Commission on Audit*,[53] the non-publication of the DBM issuance enumerating allowances that are deemed integrated in the standardized salary will not affect the execution of Section 12 of R.A. No. 6758.[54] Thus:

There is no merit in the claim of PITC that R.A. No. 6758, particularly Section 12 thereof is void because DBM-Corporate Compensation Circular No. 10, its implementing rules, was nullified in the case of *De Jesus v. Commission on Audit*, for lack of publication. The basis of COA in disallowing the grant of SFI was Section 12 of R.A. No. 6758 and not DBM-CCC No. 10. Moreover, the nullity of DBM-CCC No. 10 will not affect the validity of R.A. No. 6758. It is a cardinal rule in statutory construction that statutory provisions control the rules and regulations which may be issued pursuant thereto. Such rules and regulations must be consistent with and must not defeat the purpose of the statute. The validity of R.A. No. 6758 should not be made to depend on the validity of its implementing rules.[55] (Underscoring supplied)

This Court is conscious of the long-settled rule that publication is required as a condition precedent to the effectivity of a law to inform the public of its contents before their rights and interests are affected by the same.[56] Administrative rules and regulations must also be published if their purpose is to enforce or implement existing law pursuant also to a valid delegation.[57]

Nonetheless, the integration of allowances, such as COLA and AA, into the standardized salary rates is not dependent on the publication of CCC No. 10.[58] This benefit is deemed included in the standardized salary rates of government employees since it falls under the general rule of integration- "all allowances." [59]

The respondents, believing that they are entitled to back payment of COLA and AA under the ruling in *De Jesus*, opted to file a petition for mandamus. The petitioner, in its comment, argued that the petition has no cause of action since the respondents are not entitled to the subject allowances which were already integrated into their respective standardized salary by virtue of R.A. No. 6758.[60]

Mandamus lies to compel the performance, when refused, of a ministerial duty, but not to compel the performance of a discretionary duty.[61]

A purely ministerial act or duty is one which an officer or tribunal performs in a given state of facts, in a

prescribed manner, in obedience to the mandate of a legal authority, without regard to or the exercise of his or her own judgment upon the propriety or impropriety of the act done.[62]

The Rules on Civil Procedure are clear that mandamus only issues when there is a clear legal duty imposed upon the office or the officer sought to be compelled to perform an act, and when the party seeking mandamus has a clear legal right to the performance of such act.[63]

As discussed, the respondents are not entitled to the payment of the allowances being claimed by virtue of Section 12, R.A. No. 6785. They have no legal right to the payment of such allowances. Therefore, there is no legal basis for them to seek mandamus for the payment thereof from the petitioner.

Also, the petitioner is under no duty, ministerial or discretionary, to pay the COLA and AA to the respondents. In fact, under Section 12, R.A. No. 6785, the payment of such allowances was disallowed by reason of their integration to the standardized salary rates.

Having established that respondents are not entitled to the COLA and AA by virtue of R.A. No 6785, and that there being no legal right on their part, mandamus shall not issue to compel DBP to pay their claims. For this reason, there is no need for the Court to pass upon the other issues raised.

WHEREFORE, the petition for review on certiorari is GRANTED. The June 6, 2012 Decision and December 19, 2012 Resolution of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. SP. No. 118640 are REVERSED and SET ASIDE. The petition for mandamus before the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 98 docketed as Special Civil Action No. Q-08-63099 is hereby DISMISSED.

SO ORDERED.

Leonen, (Chairperson), Gesmundo, Carandang, and Zalameda, JJ., concur.

[1] Rollo, pp. 55- 104.

[2] Id. at 9-34; penned by Justice Leoncia Real-Dimagiba with Justices Hakim S. Abdulwahid and Marlene Gonzales-Sison, concurring.

[3] Id. at 136-150.

[4] Id. at 274-313.

[5] Id. at 157.

[6] Id. at 158.

[7] Id. at 200.

[8] Id.

[9] 355 Phil. 584 (1998).

[10] Rollo, p. 591.

[11] Id. at 21-22, 59.

[12] Id. at 159.

[13] Id. at 161.

- [14] Id. at 159.
- [15] Id. at 204.
- [16] Id.
- [17] Id. at 190-208.
- [18] Id. at 274-313.
- [19] Id. at 312-313.
- [20] Id. at 22-23.
- [21] Id. at 23.
- [22] Id. at 9-34.
- [23] Id. at 26-27.
- [24] Id. at 28.
- [25] Id. at 31-33.
- [26] Id. at 63-64.
- [27] Id. at 69.
- [28] Ronquillo, Jr., et al. v. National Electrification Administration, 785 Phil. 382 (2016).
- [29] Id. at 407.
- [30] 630 Phil. 1 (2010).
- [31] Id. at 13-17.
- [32] Ronquillo, Jr., et al. v. National Electrification Administration, supra note 28 at 400.
- [33] 691 Phil. 589 (2012).
- [34] Id. at 600.
- [35] 750 Phil. 288 (2014).
- [36] Id. at 549.
- [37] 750 Phil. 288 (2015).
- [38] Id. at 314-315.
- [39] Id. at 315.
- [40] Id. at 320.
- [41] Id. at 322.
- [42] Land Bank of the Philippines v. Naval, Jr., supra note 35 at 551.
- [43] Id.
- [44] Supra note 9.

- [45] Rollo, p. 200.
- [46] Supra note 35.
- [47] Id. at 547.
- [48] 519 Phil. 372 (2006).
- [49] Id. at 382-383.
- [50] Maritime Industry Authority v. Commission on Audit, supra note 37 at 315.
- [51] Id.
- [52] Id.
- [53] 461 Phil. 737 (2003).
- [54] Id. at 750.
- [55] Id. at 749-750.
- [56] Gutierrez, et al. v. Dep't. of Budget and Mgm't., et al., supra note 30 at 21.
- [57] Id.
- [58] Id.
- [59] Id.
- [60] Rollo, p. 251.
- [61] Sps. Go v. CA, 322 Phil. 613, 616 (1996).
- [62] Spouses Espiridion v. Court of Appeals, 523 Phil. 664, 668 (2006).
- [63] Knights of Rizal v. DMCI Homes, Inc., et al., 809 Phil. 453, 527 (2017).

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