

HILARIO JARAVATA, PETITIONER, VS. THE HON. SANDIGANBAYAN AND THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES, RESPONDENTS.

G.R. No. 56170. January 31, 1984

Ponente: ABAD SANTOS, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-56170/>

ABAD SANTOS, J.:

This is a petition to review the decision of the Sandiganbayan in Criminal Case No. 873.

Hilario Jaravata was accused of violating Section 3(b) of Republic Act No. 3019, as amended, said to have been committed in the following manner:

"That on or about the period from April 30, 1979 to May 25, 1979, in the Municipality of Tubao, Province of La Union, Philippines, and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused, being then the Assistant Principal of the Leones, Tubao, La Union Barangay High School and with the use of his influence as such public official, and taking advantage of his moral and official ascendancy over his classroom teachers, with deliberate intent did then and there wilfully, unlawfully and feloniously made demand and actually received payments from other classroom teachers, ROMEO DACAYANAN, DOMINGO LOPEZ, MARCELA BAUTISTA, and FRANCISCO DULAY various sums of money, namely: P118.00, P100.00, P50.00 and P70. 00 out of their salary differentials, in consideration of accused having officially intervened in the release of the salary differentials of the six classroom teachers, to the prejudice and damage of the said classroom teachers, in the total amount of THREE HUNDRED THIRTY EIGHT(P338.00) PESOS, Philippine Currency." (Decision, pp. 1-2.)

After trial, the Sandiganbayan rendered the following judgment:

"WHEREFORE, accused is hereby found guilty beyond reasonable doubt for Violation of Section 3(b), Republic Act No. 3019, as amended, and he is hereby sentenced to suffer an indeterminate imprisonment ranging from ONE (1) YEAR, as minimum, to FOUR (4) YEARS, as maximum, to further suffer perpetual special disqualification from public office and to pay the costs.

"No pronouncement as to the civil liability it appearing that the money given to the accused was already refunded by him." (Id., pp. 16-17.)

The petition raises factual and legal issues but for obvious reasons Our decision shall deal with the legal issue only.

The Sandiganbayan states in its decision the following:

"A perusal of the conflicting versions of the prosecution and the defense shows that there is no dispute that [complainants] Ramos, Lloren, Lopez, Dacayanan, Dulay and Bautista are classroom teachers of the Leones Barangay High School with accused as their assistant principal and [Conrado] Baltazar as the administrator; that on January 5, 1979, accused informed the classroom teachers of the approval of the release of their salary differentials for 1978 and to facilitate its payment accused and the classroom teachers agreed that accused follow-up the papers in Manila with the obligation on the part of the classroom teachers to reimburse the

accused of his expenses; that accused incurred expenses in the total amount of P220.00 and there being six classroom teachers, he divided said amount by six or at the rate of P36.00 each; that the classroom teachers actually received their salary differentials and pursuant to said agreement, they, with the exception of Lloren and Ramos, gave the accused varying amounts but as Baltazar did not approve it, he ordered the accused to return the money given to him by Lopez, Dacayanan, Dulay and Bautista, and accused complied." (Pp. 7-8.)

The decision also recites that "the evidence is overwhelming to show that accused received more than the rightful contribution of P36.00 from four classroom teachers, namely: Lopez, Dulay, Dacayanan and Bautista. Lopez categorically declared that he gave the accused P100.00 (TSN, p.5, August 21, 1980 hearing) after he received his salary differential or an excess of P64.00. So with Dulay, that he gave P70.00 to the accused (TSN, p.16, supra) or an excess of P34.00; Dacayanan, that he gave to the accused P118.00 (TSN, p. 26, supra) or an excess of P82.00, and Bautista, that he gave to the accused P50.00 (TSN, p. 38, supra) or an excess of P14.00. In short, the total amount received by the accused in excess of the share of the classroom teachers in the reimbursement of his expenses is P194.00." (P. 9.)

Republic Act No. 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act provides, inter alia, the following:

"Sec. 3. Corrupt practices of public officers. - In addition to acts or omissions of public officers already penalized by existing law, the following shall constitute corrupt practices of any public officer and are hereby declared to be unlawful:

x x x x x x x x

(b) Directly or indirectly requesting or receiving any gift, present, share, per-centage, or benefit, for himself or for any other person in connection with any contract or transaction between the Government and any other party, wherein the public officer in his official capacity has to intervene under the law.

x x x x x x x x "

The legal issue is whether or not, under the facts stated, petitioner Jaravata violated the above-quoted provision of the statute.

A simple reading of the provision has to yield a negative answer.

There is no question that Jaravata at the time material to the case was, a "public officer" as defined by Section 2 of R.A. No. 3019, i.e. "elective and appointive officials and employees, permanent or temporary, whether in the classified or unclassified or exempt service receiving compensation, even nominal, from the government." It may also be said that any amount which Jaravata received in excess of P36. 00 from each of the complainants was in the concept of a gift or benefit. The pivotal question, however, is whether Jaravata, an assistant principal of a high school in the boondocks of Tubao, La Union, "in his official capacity has to intervene under the law" in the payment of the salary differentials for 1978 of the complainants. It should be noted that the arrangement was "to facilitate its [salary differential] payment accused and the classroom teachers agreed that accused follow-up the papers in Manila with the Obligation on the part of the classroom teachers to reimburse the accused of his expenses."

In Our opinion, Sec. 3 (b) of R.A. No. 3019, refers to a public officer whose official intervention is required by law in a contract or transaction.

There is no law which invests the petitioner with the power to intervene in the payment of the salary differentials of the complainants or anyone for that matter. Far from exercising any power, the petitioner played the humble role of a supplicant whose mission was to expedite payment of the salary differentials. In his official capacity as

assistant principal, he is not required by law to intervene in the payment of the salary differentials. Accordingly, he cannot be said to have violated the law afore-cited although he exerted efforts to facilitate the payment of the salary differentials.

WHEREFORE, the petition is hereby granted and the judgment of the Sandiganbayan convicting the petitioner is set aside. Costs de oficio.

SO ORDERED.

Fernando, C.J., Teehankee, Makasiar, Aquino, Concepcion, Jr., Guerrero, De Castro, Melencio-Herrera, Plana, Escolin, Relova, and Gutierrez, Jr., JJ., concur.

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.