

USEC VILLAR INHIBITS FROM DOJ REVIEW OF WATER DEALS

MANILA -- Department of Justice (DOJ) Undersecretary Emmeline Aglipay-Villar on Friday inhibited herself from the agency's review of the water concessionaire contracts by the government.

"To eliminate any cloud of doubt on the impartiality of the Department's review and renegotiation of the water concession agreements with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System that my affinity to the owners of PrimeWater Infrastructure Corp. have brought, I am inhibiting from any involvement in the Department's review and renegotiation of the said agreements," Aglipay-Villar said in her memorandum to Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra.

The justice undersecretary, a former Diwa Party-list representative and daughter of former national police chief Edgar Aglipay, is the wife of Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar, whose family runs Prime Water Infrastructure Corp.

Meanwhile, Guevarra confirmed that Aglipay-Villar made the move in compliance with his request.

"I requested Usec. Villar to inhibit herself to dispel suspicions that the DOJ contract review may not be completely objective due to an alleged possible conflict of interest. It's unfair to Usec Villar who has always acted with professionalism, but the circumstances call for it. One thing I can say, any good lawyer will come to the same findings and conclusion," Guevarra told reporters.

Guevarra publicly said while the government has enough basis to take over the operations of water concessionaires, it is currently more concerned at amending the onerous provisions in the agreements, which were originally signed in 1997 between the government and concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad.

Manila Water is a subsidiary of the Ayala Corp., while businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan's Metro Pacific Investments Corp. owns

a controlling stake in Maynilad.

The two private companies distribute water in Metro Manila and other parts of the country under agreements signed with state regulator Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) in 1997.

In March, supply interruptions started in various areas serviced by Maynilad and Manila Water due to increased demand and reduced water levels of dams

BI to deport 3 fugitives

MANILA -- The Bureau of Immigration (BI) on Friday said it is deporting three foreigners wanted by law enforcers in their homelands.

BI Commissioner Jaime Morente said a South Korean and two Americans were arrested in separate operations in northern and central Luzon as well as in Manila within the past two weeks by operatives from the bureau's fugitive search unit (FSU).

"They will all be deported for being undesirable aliens and for being undocumented as their passports have either expired or were already cancelled by their respective governments," he said in a statement.

Morente issued mission orders for their arrest at the request of the American and South Korean embassies in Manila which want them deported so they could be prosecuted and sentenced for their crimes.

On Wednesday, BI-FSU agents arrested Korean Choi Beomki, 52, in Malate, Manila, who is wanted for fraud by Seoul authorities.

The Korean embassy said Choi defrauded his victims of more than 400 million won in real estate investments. He is also the subject of a red notice from Interpol.

The BI-FSU agents arrested American Ephraim Hizon Garcia, 64, in San Fernando City, Pampanga on Tuesday.

He is wanted to stand trial before a court in Washington, D.C. on charges of committing bribery, illegal gratuities and violating the US federal anti-kickback act.

amid a scorching dry season in the country.

President Rodrigo Duterte lashed out at the water concessionaires after a review conducted by the DOJ showed the water contracts were "onerous and disadvantageous to the people, relative the terms or periods, government non-interference, as well as concessionaire indemnification for losses."

Due to the two provisions, the government was

ordered by the Singapore arbitration court to pay about PHP3.6 billion to Maynilad and recently, PHP7.4 billion to Manila Water as compensation for losses and damages.

Guevarra said another onerous provision is the extension of these contracts to 2037, considering that the extension was granted 12 years to 13 years before the original expiration of the 25-year concession agreements in 2022. (PNA)

Embassy, he was issued an arrest warrant by a court in Washoe County, Nevada for allegedly raping a minor. He was reportedly charged with sexually assaulting and engaging in lewdness with a child under 14 years old.

All of them are detained at the BI jail in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City while awaiting deportation. (PNA)

SC issues rules on Maguindanao massacre case coverage

MANILA -- The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday released guidelines for media coverage of the long-anticipated promulgation of the decision in the Maguindanao massacre case.

In a notice sent to newsmen, Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez and Assistant Court Administrator Brian Keith F. Hosaka assured the public that the high court will immediately upload the decision of the trial court in the case in the SC website as soon as possible.

Only two video cameras will be allowed to take footage of the proceedings to be provided and manned by the personnel of the state-run People's Television Network (PTV) upon the request of the high court.

The first camera of PTV shall be directed at the judge and whoever will read the decision, on a wide angle shot, while the second camera of PTV shall be directed at the lawyers, counsels and the parties, also on a wide angle shot.

In no case will the shot pan the surroundings or zoom in on any individuals inside the courtroom.

The video footage shall be shared in real-time with other broadcast networks.

"No expert commentaries shall be allowed during the live coverage of the promulgation," the guidelines said of the broadcast networks adding that PTV "shall air the promulgation without any interruption".

In November, the Supreme Court (SC) granted Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 221 Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes' request to be given more time to come up with a decision.

Solis-Reyes said the decision will be promulgated on December 19. Chief Justice Diosdado Peralta said the court considered the huge volume of evidence and parties in the case in giving a 30-day extension to Solis-Reyes.

Under court rules, all trial courts should promulgate their decision within the 90-day period after the case has been submitted for decision.

The case has been submitted for decision on August 22 which means the deadline for its promulgation should have been on November 20, three days before the massacre's 10th anniversary on November 23.

The attack resulted in the death of 58 people, including 32 journalists and media workers, the single worst peace-time incident involving the killing of newsmen.

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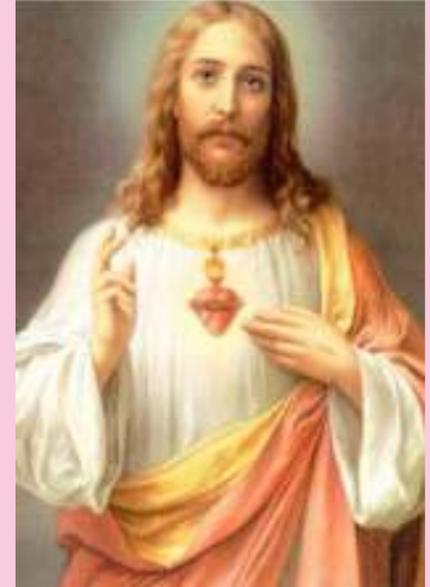
PATAS AT MAKATARUNGANG PAHAYAGAN

YOUR NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

Prayer for Healing

JESUS, may Your pure and healthy blood circulate in my ailing organism, and may Your pure and healthy body transform my weak body, and may a healthy and vigorous life throb within me, if it is truly Your holy will. Amen.

O BLOOD AND WATER WHICH FLOWED OUT FROM THE HEART OF JESUS AS A FOUNTAIN OF MERCY FOR US, I TRUST IN YOU!



Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, Have Mercy on us and on the whole world. Amen.

3 O'CLOCK PRAYER

"You died Jesus, but the source of life flowed out for souls and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fountain of Life immeasurable Divine Mercy, cover the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us."

"O Blood and Water which flowed out from the heart of Jesus as a Fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in you!"

"Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One have mercy on us and on the whole world." (3x) Amen.

Jesus, King of Mercy, I trust in you!

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