

## **ARTA FILES CHARGES AGAINST BATANGAS LGU MAYOR**

**OCTOBER 7, 2019-** The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) has filed a case against Mayor Lester D. De Sagun of San Nicolas, Batangas for violating the Local Government Code under Section 60 paragraphs (c) and (e) and the R.A. 11032 under Section 21 paragraphs (a) and (e).

ARTA Director General Jeremiah Belgica led the case filing against the Batangas mayor at the Office of the Ombudsman after an investigation was preceded by a complaint against the mayor.

The following are the violations Mayor Sagun committed under the Local Government Code under Section 60 particularly:

- (c) Dishonesty, oppression, misconduct in office, gross negligence, or declaration of duty;
- (e) Abuse of authority

Meanwhile, under Section 21 of Republic Act 11032 of the “*Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018*”, his violations are as follows:

- (a) Refusal to accept application or request with complete requirements being submitted by an applicant or requesting party without due cause;
- (e) Failure to render government services within the prescribed processing time on any application or request without due cause;

Furthermore, under the EODB Law, stricter penalties are imposed. The law gives ARTA more teeth in pursuing anti-red tape cases as it introduces stricter rules such as the two-strike policy, which spells out penalties warranted for the first and second violation of the law. Depending on the investigation of the Ombudsman, the first offense may apply. Penalties for the first and second offense are as follows:

First Offense: Administrative liability with six (6) months suspension;

Second Offense: Administrative liability and criminal liability of dismissal from the service, perpetual disqualification from holding public office, and forfeiture of retirement benefits and imprisonment of one (1) year to six (6) years with a fine of not less than five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (P2,000,000.00).

“Handa po kaming makipagtulungan sa mga ahensiya ng gobyerno na nais ayusin at pabilisin ang kanilang serbisyo publiko. Ngunit, kung hindi kayo tatalima sa ating batas, maging sino man kayo, hindi kami magdadalawang isip na parusahan kayo”, the ARTA czar stated.

ARTA previously filed cases at the Civil Service Commission against employees of the Registry of Deeds and the Land Transportation and Franchising Board following mounting complaints and an investigation that involved surprise inspections and several dialogues with the stakeholders and concerned agencies.

ARTA is working double time to implement the landmark law that is number three in the Socio-economic agenda of the President whose main directive in his last SONA is for the government to provide comfortable lives for the Filipino.

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