

Postscript

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Fair warning to VIPs with arrest warrants

LOCSIN NABBED: Another big fish caught last week in Makati was Enrique Locsin, former director of Philippine Communications Satellite Corp., who was arrested at the corner of Ayala Ave. and Rufino St. on graft charges.

The filing of the charges, with former Philcomsat executive Manuel Andal as co-accused, was approved last Nov. 11 by Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales after reviewing the files left by her predecessor.

Operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group carried a warrant issued by the Sandiganbayan. They had staked out the lobby of the nearby Tuscany condominium where Locsin stays and caught up with him on Rufino.

He was taken to the CIDG office at Fort Bonifacio where he had to pose for the usual mug shot and undergo fingerprinting. Locsin is out on a P30,000 bail, while Andal is being hunted.

FAT FEES: Records showed that Locsin and Andal were accused of collecting "grossly exorbitant salaries" of P300,000 a month both from Philcomsat and the Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp., and other benefits from the sequestered firm.

Audit reports said Locsin received P15 million between 2003 and 2005 in "unexplained reimbursements." But he and Andal justified the amounts as in keeping with their status as officers of the corporation.

They said that they were not government nominees or appointees to the Philcomsat board and, thus, could not have violated Memorandum Circular 40 that set a maximum of P180,000 on the salaries of board members of sequestered companies.



40 THIEVES: The case recalls the privilege speech in 2008 of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, whose family owns substantial shares in Philcomsat.

In his speech titled "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," Enrile accused several individuals of "wanton and unjustifiable looting, pillaging and plundering" of P56 million worth of Philcomsat resources.

Among those he mentioned were Locsin and one-time Philcomsat officer Benito Araneta, cousin of former First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Aside from the alleged dissipation of millions, Enrile found unconscionable Locsin's reportedly charging to Philcomsat the cost of a P180,000 hearing aid, a laptop, leather case and a wallet.

'ALKANSYA': Enrile said Araneta chaired the Executive Committee that approved, authorized and issued a check all in just one day a P125-million loan to a family corporation solely on the basis of a promissory note — without collateral and without board ratification.

He said that Araneta had received compensation and allowances amounting to P5.2 million, including a \$10,000 travel allowance, and failed to liquidate millions in advances.

The senator remarked that the company was being treated as a private "alkansiya" (piggy bank).