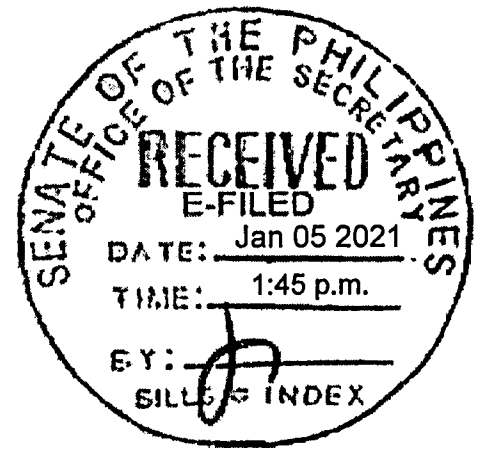


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 603

Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED
EARLY INOCULATION OF MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, THE
PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY GROUP AND SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES USING UNREGISTERED AND
SMUGGLED COVID-19 VACCINES

WHEREAS, according to Art. II, Sec. 27 of the 1987 Constitution, "the State shall maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption;"

WHEREAS, no less than Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana admitted that illegal means were undertaken for President Rodrigo Duterte's close-in security to be vaccinated ahead of everyone else with unlicensed drugs;¹

WHEREAS, Sec. Lorenzana was quoted saying, "It is smuggled because it's been unauthorized. *Hindi authorized itong mga pumapasok dito*. Only the government can authorize that through the FDA, *so lumulusot 'yan dito, unti-unti siguro*;"²

¹ CNN Philippines. *Duterte's security used 'smuggled' vaccines, but troops will wait for FDA-approved drug – Lorenzana*. (30 December 2020). Retrieved from: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/12/30/Duterte-PSG-smuggled-vaccines-COVID-19-Lorenzana.html>

² *Ibid.*

WHEREAS, Sec. Lorezana said the PSG has to explain to FDA since it violated the country's regulatory laws. At the same time, he defended their action because it's "justified" since they did it to effectively carry out their duties;³

WHEREAS, it was reported that the Presidential Security Group (PSG), the team which guards Duterte, has secretly completed their two doses over a month ago. The covert activity only came to light this week after the President revealed that "almost all soldiers" have been jabbed with China-made vaccine Sinopharm — which has not even applied for clinical trial nor emergency use in the Philippines;⁴

WHEREAS, PSG Chief Jesus Durante said the doses were donated, but FDA Director General Eric Domingo said it still has to go through their agency and the Department of Health — an important step skipped by the PSG, an agency attached to the Office of the President;⁵

WHEREAS, Philippine Army Chief Lt. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana revealed in an interview over DWIZ that some members of the military were inoculated with a still unregistered COVID-19 vaccine on orders from "the chain of command of the armed forces," indicating it was authorized by President Rodrigo Duterte himself;⁶

WHEREAS, besides the military, some unnamed Cabinet officials have also been vaccinated, according to Interior Secretary Eduardo Año;⁷

WHEREAS, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque noted that the vaccines were likely donated by an unidentified source;⁸

WHEREAS, the importation, distribution, and transfer of any health product that is adulterated, unregistered or misbranded is prohibited under R.A. No. 9711, or the Food and Drug Administration Act of 2009;

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ CNN Philippines. Army chief says troop vaccination authorized by Duterte. (28 December 2020). Retrieved from: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/12/28/military-covid-vaccination-duterte-authorized.html>

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

WHEREAS, the dispensation of any pharmaceutical product by non-licensed pharmacists and outside outlets licensed by the FDA is prohibited under R.A. 10918, or the Philippine Pharmacy Act;

WHEREAS, the illegal practice of medicine, including treatment or prescription of any remedy for any human disease, is punishable under R.A. No. 2382 or the Medical Act of 1959;

WHEREAS, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said it would launch its own investigation of the clandestine inoculation of President Rodrigo Duterte's close-in security detail with a vaccine for COVID-19 not yet authorized by local regulators;⁹

WHEREAS, AFP Spokesperson Maj. Gen. Edgard Arevalo said Chief of Staff Gen. Gilbert Gapay ordered a "thorough investigation on the factual circumstances surrounding the incident;"¹⁰

WHEREAS, the AFP, however, supported the statement made by PSG commander Brig. Jesus Durante III justifying the inoculation of Duterte's bodyguards "to greatly reduce the possibility of being the source and carrier of this virus and consequently infect the President, whose good health and well-being are the PSG's primordial concern;"¹¹

WHEREAS, in his address to the nation on 4 January 2021, President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the PSG to remain silent on its controversial vaccination if asked by lawmakers to appear in their investigation;¹²

WHEREAS, Pres. Duterte was quoted saying, "So if they will be called to testify in Congress, as a lawyer...I will just ask the PSG to just shut up. Do not answer. Invoke the

⁹ Cabalza, Dexter. Inquirer.net. AFP starts own probe of PSG use of China vaccine (2 January 2021). Retrieved from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1378454/afp-also-probing-psg-use-of-sino-vaccine>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² CNN Philippines. Duterte tells PSG to keep mum in COVID-19 vaccine probe. (5 January 2021). Retrieved from: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/1/5/Duterte-PSG-mum-COVID-19-vaccine-probe-.html>

right against self-incrimination,” Duterte said on Monday night. “Do not force my soldiers to testify against their will;”¹³

WHEREAS, our Constitution established our government “under the rule of law and a regime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality and peace;”

WHEREAS, there is need to inquire as to the facts surrounding the early inoculation of members of the Cabinet, the PSG and AFP officials;

WHEREAS, it must be ascertained who smuggled the vaccine and who distributed them to the said public officials and how they were able to do so outside government regulations;

WHEREAS, those who have been vaccinated are senior officials of our country who are essential to the functioning of our democracy. As such, to have them vaccinated with unregistered and unvetted vaccines constitutes endangerment not only to themselves but also to our national security;

WHEREAS, there is also need to ascertain the intent of the person or persons who distributed these unregistered vaccines to our officials and, if possible, determine if they are enemies of the State;

WHEREAS, an examination must also be done on the contents of the vaccine received by our officials to ensure that they are not harmful to their health;

WHEREAS, while officials may invoke their well intentions in receiving the unregistered and unvetted vaccine, the fact remains that laws were still broken and our country was placed in danger by receiving this illegal inoculation without knowing its contents;

WHEREAS, withholding of information on this matter during any investigation serves only to protect criminals who smuggled and are probably still smuggling these illegal vaccines into our country;

¹³ *ibid.*

WHEREAS, the officials so inoculated must reveal all the information that they have on the unregistered vaccines if only to protect our country against forces seeking to influence the highest office in our land to the detriment of our people;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the reported early inoculation of members of the Cabinet, the Presidential Security Group and senior officials in the Armed Forces of the Philippines using unregistered and smuggled COVID-19 vaccines.

Adopted,


DEILA M. DE LIMA