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## **Fertilizer funds scam defendants post bail** [1]

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MANILA, Philippines (UPDATED) - Two former lawmakers and a former governor have posted bail in connection with criminal charges filed against them before the Sandiganbayan for alleged collusion with Department of Agriculture (DA) officials over the P728-million fertilizer funds scam.

Former Quezon City Rep. Nannette Castelo Daza and former Marinduque Rep. Carmencita Reyes posted P60,000 bail each for graft and technical malversation charges.

Former Catanduanes provincial governor Leandro Verceles Jr., meanwhile, posted P30,000 over his graft case.

Sandiganbayan sources said the bail bonds were posted without waiting for the court to determine existence of probable cause, which precedes the issuance of arrest warrants.

The indictments were approved by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro last April 15 but the informations were filed only last May 6 and were raffled off to the 5 divisions of the Sandiganbayan last May 13.




However, the plunder case against former Agriculture Secretary Luis Ramon Lorenzo, former DA undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante, former assistant secretary for field operations Ibarra Poliquit, 6 private respondents and several John and Jane Does has yet to be filed.

Named co-accused in the plunder case were private individuals Jaime Paule, Marilyn Araos, Joselito Flordeliza, Marites Aytona, Jose Barredo, and Leonicia Marco-Llanera.

They allegedly cornered the delivery of overpriced liquid fertilizer to various recipients named in Bolante's list.

A court official warned that the delay in the filing of the plunder charge could make tracing the assets of the defendants for possible attachment more difficult.

as of 05/18/2011 12:55 AM

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