

I was victimized by 'unknown' syndicate - Bongbong

by Ron Gaglac, ABS-CBN News

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MANILA - Senator Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos said he is also now probing questionable transactions under the so-called Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) after allegedly being victimized by an unknown "syndicate."

Marcos said around P45 million under his DAP allocations were released in 2012 to at least four non-government organizations (NGOs) without his knowledge.

He said he only came to know about it when the Commission on Audit (COA) sent him a letter last week asking for verification of the documents.

The NGOs were: Ginintuang Alay sa Magsasaka Foundation Inc., Agri and Economic Program for Farmers Foundation Inc., Kaupdanang Para sa Mangunguma Foundation, and Agricultura Para sa Magbubukid Foundation Inc.

It was not clear whether these NGOs were connected to businesswoman Janet Lim Napoles.

The DAP is a separate funding mechanism from the controversial Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF). It authorizes solons to finance livelihood projects in various local government

units nationwide.

Based on further research, Marcos said the DAP is supposedly sourced from savings made by the government since 2011. These were given to lawmakers in two tranches of P100 million each.

In the case of Marcos, it was supposedly the National Livelihood Development Corporation (NLDC) that is the implementing agency.

Marcos said, however, he was unaware that such kind of funding exists. He only came only to know that DAP existed only after the COA showed them the documents.

"Hindi ko alam na may pondong ganyan...Paano nangyari ito? Sinong involved? Walang sinasabi sa akin at kahit sino sa opisina ko," he said.

Marcos said they have requested the NLDC for the original documents so they can examine further the transactions he supposedly entered into.

Marcos said he can only assume that someone or some group in the government has been conspiring to steal the money using the senators' name not only via the PDAF but also via other funding mechanisms of the government.

"Somebody did this. It's my office, pero pinangalan sa akin para nakawin yung pera," he said.

To comply with the COA request, he said his office tried to retrieve documents pertaining to such transactions. He said they found none.

The endorsement letter, attached to the COA request, did not appear in their docket system which was implemented in senators' offices beginning January 2011.

This, he said, already made them doubtful of the authenticity of the transaction.

They later found out that his signature in the alleged NLDC endorsement letter dated March 16, 2012 was also falsified, he said.

In another Memorandum of Agreement with NLDC being asked by COA to be verified, the name of Marcos did not appear but that of his chief-of-staff, Ramon B. Cardenas.

Their investigation, however, revealed that the signature of Cardenas was also falsified.

Marcos also found out that the MOAs are of dubious origin because they were allegedly notarized by a certain Atty. Antonio M. Santos of Makati City. According to the Office of the Clerk of Court in Makati, Santos was not commissioned as a notary public for the years covering 2011-2013.

Meanwhile, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines also issued a certification that the IBP Lifetime Number attached to the name of Santos belongs to another individual.

Marcos said their investigation is still on going to know the real score behind this operation. "Mukhang yan ang sistema, gumagawa sila ng ganito, idi-direct nila sa NGO, kukuhanin ang pera," he said.