

# Imelda Marcos' jewels to go on sale after green light from Philippine president

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By Reuters Staff  
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MANILA (Reuters) - The jewelry of former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos, famed for her extravagant spending and vast shoe collection, will go on sale with the proceeds going to benefit the Philippine public, the president's spokesman said on Thursday.

The government's assets recovery body had sought President Rodrigo Duterte's approval for the sale of one of the three sets of jewelry confiscated three decades ago after the fall of Imelda's husband, the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"I asked (Duterte), are you going to give your go signal to sell? (He said) yes, as long as the proceeds from the sale will benefit the public," presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo told reporters in Tokyo where Duterte is on a working visit.

The collection, seized in Hawaii, where Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos lived in exile, includes a rare 25-carat, barrel shaped diamond which London-based auction house Christie's said in 2015 could be valued at \$5 million.

The government had tried to auction the collections in the past but Imelda Marcos, now 89, had contested the move. The three sets in the collection, held in the central bank's vault for safekeeping, were valued at \$6 million in 1991.

Imelda is perhaps best known for leaving behind more than a thousand pairs of shoes when her family fled the Philippines after a people power revolution in 1986.

But after the late dictator died in exile in 1989, the Marcos family was allowed to return and have made a political comeback with several members elected to public office.

Duterte's rise to power has been a boon for the Marcos family. He backed the senatorial campaign of Imelda's daughter, Imee, who won a senate seat in this month's mid-term polls.

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