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President Gloria M. Arroyo places Task Force Subic under Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group

MANILA, Jan. 10 (PGON) - President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has placed Task Force Subic under the jurisdiction of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG) in a move to plug loopholes in the government's anti-smuggling operations at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

The Presidential Directive was contained in Executive Order (EO) No. 687 which she signed last Dec. 28. The EO also mandates the streamlining of the anti-smuggling operations at the SBMA.

The President stressed that largescale smuggling and "other related practices" do not only undermine the economy by posing a threat to national security.

"There is a need to closely supervise the activities of Task Force Subic so as to effectively curtail smuggling and other related practices against customs laws at the Subic Bay Freeport and all areas under the jurisdiction of the SBMA," she said.

Task Force Subic was created under Executive Order 384 to "prevent and suppress smuggling and other related practices against customs laws at the SBMA."

Its transfer to the jurisdiction of the PASG came in the wake of reports of alleged rampant smuggling of assorted products, including luxury vehicles, at the Freeport.

The Constitution, particularly Section 17 of Article VII, provides that the President shall have control over all executive departments, bureaus and other offices; and that the President shall ensure that all laws be faithfully executed.

The President also has the continuing authority to reorganize the administrative structure of the executive department. Likewise, the Chief Executive has the power to transfer any function under the Office of the President to any other executive department, according to an earlier executive order, EO 292 (Paragraph 2, Section 31, Chapter 10, Title III, Book III). #

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