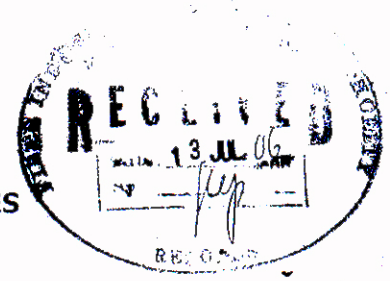
MALACAÑANG
Manila



BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 538

AN ORDER REPEALING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 502 "BANNING THE HARVESTING, GATHERING, BUYING, SELLING AND MUTILATING OF MATURED AND YOUNG LEAFSHEATHS OF ABACA PLANTS (MUSA TEXTILES NEE) FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES".

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 502 entitled "Banning the Harvesting, Gathering, Buying, Selling and Mutilating of Matured and Young Leafsheaths of Abaca Plants (Musa Textiles Nee) for Commercial Purposes" was issued on February 2, 2006;

WHEREAS, the harvesting, gathering, buying, selling and mutilating of mature and young leafsheaths (locally known as "bakbak" or "umbak") of abaca plant are prohibited by Executive Order No. 502, for the primary purpose of preventing the spread of abaca diseases which has affected certain areas in Southern Leyte and adjoining areas;

WHEREAS, the Local Governments of disease-infected barangays of Maasin, Baybay, Sugod and Bontok in Southern Leyte and Mahaplag in Leyte have issued the necessary ordinances to control the spread of abaca disease;

WHEREAS, "bakbak" or "umbak" is used as a raw material for local and export products;

WHEREAS, the ban resulted to a disruption in the material supply chain of furniture, furnishing and handicrafts exports that use "bakbak" or "umbak" as raw materials, thus resulting in significant economic losses to stakeholders;

WHEREAS, there are still disease-free areas in the Philippines where "bakbak" or "umbak" can be sourced thus the withdrawal of the ban would not cause harm to the public good and welfare;

WHEREAS, Section 1 of EO 428 mandates the simplification of rules and regulations and the reduction of reportorial requirements to facilitate doing business and encourage more investments in the country thereby allowing business and industry to devote maximum effort and time to their operation and expansion rather than in compliance with excessive bureaucratic requirements wherein LGUs are encouraged to adopt similar measures.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

Sec. 1 Executive Order No. 502 dated February 2, 2006 is hereby repealed.

Sec. 2 The Local Government units of disease-infected barangays in Southern Leyte and Leyte provinces are hereby encouraged to strictly implement their ordinances restricting the transport of "bakbak" or "umbak" until the abaca disease is sufficiently controlled.

Sec. 3 All executive orders or issuances, or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby revoked, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 4 This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila on this 4th day of July in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six.

gloria Arroyo

By the President:

EDUARDO R. ERMITA
Executive Secretary

CERTIFIED COPY:

MARIANITO M. DIMAANDAL
Officer-in-Charge
Malacañang Records Office
07-10-2006

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