



Republic of the Philippines  
**Sandiganbayan**  
Quezon City

**FIFTH DIVISION**

**PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES,**  
*Plaintiff,*

**SB-17-CRM-0942**

For: Violation of Section 3(e),  
R.A. No. 3019, as amended

- versus -

**DATU SAJID ISLAM U. AMPATUAN,**  
**ET AL.,**

*Accused.*

X ----- X

**PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES,**  
*Plaintiff,*

**SB-17-CRM-0943**

For: Malversation of Public Funds

- versus -

**DATU SAJID ISLAM U. AMPATUAN,**  
**ET AL.,**

*Accused.*

X ----- X

**PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES,**  
*Plaintiff,*

**SB-17-CRM-0944 to 0977**

For: Falsification of Public Documents

- versus -

Present:

**DATU SAJID ISLAM U. AMPATUAN,**  
**ET AL.,**

LAGOS, J., *Chairperson,*  
MENDOZA-ARCEGA, and  
CORPUS-MAÑALAC, JJ.

*Accused.*

Promulgated:

X ----- X

May 29, 2023

*Severino G. Gant*

**RESOLUTION**

**CORPUS-MAÑALAC, J.:**

Before this Court is the *Manifestation with Motion*<sup>1</sup> dated May 8, 2023 filed by accused Datu Sajid Islam U. Ampatuan, through counsel, on May 9, 2023. The accused avers that his counsel, PARAOAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES, was not notified of the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment in these cases on May 5, 2023, either via electronic mail or personal service, wherein the Court found him guilty beyond reasonable doubt in Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0942 and SB-17-CRM-0943; that the said counsel became aware of the promulgation of judgment only upon service of a copy of the Decision<sup>2</sup> via electronic mail on May 8, 2023; and that he himself, as accused, was also not notified of the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment.

He asks that his and his counsel's absence during the promulgation of judgment be excused and prays that he be allowed to avail of post-conviction remedies and be given "fifteen (15) days from today to file"<sup>3</sup> a motion for reconsideration.

On May 11, 2023, the prosecution filed its *Comment-Opposition*<sup>4</sup> of even date, arguing for the denial of the reliefs sought by the accused, on the ground that he is a fugitive from justice, with prior judgments of conviction rendered by the *Sandiganbayan*.

At this juncture, the Court deems that a summary of the relevant antecedents, as borne out by the records, is necessary.

On June 8, 2017, COLLADO LAW OFFICE (later COLLADO AND ASSOCIATES) filed its *Entry of Appearance*<sup>5</sup> dated June 2, 2017 as counsel for accused Ampatuan. On October 9, 2019, CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES filed its *Appearance*<sup>6</sup> dated September 23, 2019 as collaborating counsel for the said accused, who conformed thereto via his signature. In a Minute Resolution<sup>7</sup> dated October 11, 2019, the Court noted the appearance of CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES as collaborating counsel. In a *Motion To Be Relieved as Counsel*<sup>8</sup> dated January 15, 2021, COLLADO AND ASSOCIATES prayed that it be relieved of its duties and responsibilities as counsel. In a Minute Resolution<sup>9</sup> dated January 25, 2021, the Court granted the motion and directed that "all notices, orders, resolutions, decision and other court processes relative to accused [x x x] Ampatuan [x x x] be sent to said accused and/or the collaborating counsel on record, Castro Castro & Associates [x x x]."

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<sup>1</sup> Unpaginated.

<sup>2</sup> Records, Vol. 6, pp. 379-452.

<sup>3</sup> Manifestation and Motion, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Unpaginated.

<sup>5</sup> Records, Vol. 1, pp. 223-224.

<sup>6</sup> Records, Vol. 4, pp. 105-106.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 113.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 441-445.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 420.

On February 1, 2021, PAROAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES filed its *Formal Entry of Appearance*<sup>10</sup> dated January 25, 2021, likewise as collaborating counsel for the same accused, who also conformed thereto via his signature. In a Minute Resolution<sup>11</sup> dated February 1, 2021, the Court noted the appearance of PAROAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES as collaborating counsel.

After trial, on April 19, 2023, the Office of the Clerk of Court (OCC) of this Court served notice of the promulgation of judgment scheduled on May 5, 2023 upon CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES, *inter alia*, via electronic mail to its addresses on record.<sup>12</sup> On April 24, 2023, the notice was personally served upon CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES.<sup>13</sup> On April 20, 2023, a notice was sent to accused Ampatuan via registered mail, with Registry Number RE 626 250 228 ZZ, at his last known address on record.<sup>14</sup> A notice does not appear on record to have been served upon PAROAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES, whether via electronic mail or personal service.

On May 5, 2023, during the promulgation of judgment, accused Ampatuan and his co-accused, Datuali K. Abpi, Al Haj, and their respective counsels were absent. The Order<sup>15</sup> dated May 5, 2023 reads:

At the promulgation of judgment, only Prosecutor [x x x] appeared for the prosecution. Accused Datu Sajid Islam Uy Ampatuan and accused Datuali K. Abpi, Al Haj, and their counsels were absent despite being notified of today's promulgation.

There being no justifiable cause for their absences, let the promulgation of judgment be done. A judgment of conviction in Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0942 and SB-17-CRM-0943 was entered against accused Ampatuan and Abpi. In Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0944 to [0977], accused Ampatuan and Abpi are acquitted.

Considering their absence, let therefore, warrants for the arrest of accused Ampatuan and Abpi in the cases where they were adjudged guilty be forthwith issued. The surety bonds submitted by the said accused are ordered forfeited in view of the failure of the bondsmen to produce the said accused at today's promulgation.

SO ORDERED.

On May 8, 2023, the OCC of this Court furnished the *Sandiganbayan* Judicial Records Division (Docket Section) and CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES and PAROAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES a copy of the Decision dated May 5, 2023 via electronic mail to

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at 423-424.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* at 426.

<sup>12</sup> Records, Vol. 6, pp. 364, 368.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at 369.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 366, 366-A, 366-B.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* at 372.

their addresses on record,<sup>16</sup> and the judgment was then recorded in the Court Docket Criminal Book<sup>17</sup> of the Judicial Records Division. On May 9, 2023, a copy of the decision was sent to accused Ampatuan via registered mail, with Registry Number RE 554 199 138 ZZ, at his last known address on record.<sup>18</sup>

On May 9, 2023, the Court received the present *Manifestation with Motion* dated May 8, 2023.

### RULING

Before proceeding to the merits of the motion, the Court must first pass upon the issue of whether the promulgation of judgment was valid or whether the requirements for the promulgation *in absentia* were complied with.

Section 6, Rule 120 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure governs the procedure in the promulgation of judgment in criminal cases:

Section 6. *Promulgation of judgment.* — The judgment is promulgated by reading it in the presence of the accused and any judge of the court in which it was rendered. However, if the conviction is for a light offense, the judgment may be pronounced in the presence of his counsel or representative. [x x x].

x x x x

The proper clerk of court shall give notice to the accused personally or through his bondsman or warden and counsel, requiring him to be present at the promulgation of the decision. If the accused was tried *in absentia* because he jumped bail or escaped from prison, the notice to him shall be served at his last known address.

In case the accused fails to appear at the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment despite notice, the promulgation shall be made by recording the judgment in the criminal docket and serving him a copy thereof at his last known address or thru his counsel.

If the judgment is for conviction and the failure of the accused to appear was without justifiable cause, he shall lose the remedies available in these Rules against the judgment and the court shall order his arrest. Within fifteen (15) days from promulgation of judgment, however, the accused may surrender and file a motion for leave of court to avail of these remedies. He shall state the reasons for his absence at the scheduled promulgation and if he proves that his absence was for a justifiable cause, he shall be allowed to avail of said remedies within fifteen (15) days from notice.

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<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 453.

<sup>17</sup> Vol. 65, pp. 101-136.

<sup>18</sup> Records, Vol. 6, pp. 458-460.

Contrary to the asseveration in the *Manifestation and Motion* that accused Ampatuan was not notified of the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment, the records show that such notice was sent to him on April 20, 2023 via registered mail at his last known address on record.<sup>19</sup>

Although no notice appears on record to have been served upon PAROAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES, a notice was served upon CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES on April 19, 2023<sup>20</sup> and April 24, 2023<sup>21</sup> via electronic mail and personal service, respectively. It bears stressing that both counsels entered their respective appearances as *collaborating counsel* for the said accused. While it may be desirable that a notice was served upon both collaborating counsels, the Court holds that notice to the accused and his counsel CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES is sufficient to comply with the notice requirement for the scheduled promulgation of judgment.

Despite notice, however, the accused failed to appear at the promulgation. As for the absence of his counsel despite notice to CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES, jurisprudence dictates that the absence of counsel, despite notice, during the promulgation will not result in a violation of any substantial right of the accused, and it will not affect the validity of the promulgation.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the promulgation *in absentia* in these cases was allowed under the Rules.

*Pascua v. Court of Appeals*<sup>23</sup> is instructive on the requirements for the promulgation *in absentia*, in accordance with Section 6 of Rule 120:

As held in *Florendo v. Court of Appeals (supra)*, the rules allow promulgation of judgment *in absentia* to obviate the situation where juridical process could be subverted by the accused jumping bail. But the Rules also provide measures to make promulgation *in absentia* a formal and solemn act so that the absent accused, wherever he may be, can be notified of the judgment rendered against him. As discussed earlier, **the sentence imposed by the trial court cannot be served in the absence of the accused**. Hence, all means of notification must be done to let the absent accused know of the judgment of the court. And the means provided by the Rules are: (1) the act of giving notice to all persons or **the act of recording or registering the judgment in the criminal docket** (which Section 6 incidentally mentions first showing its importance; and (2) **the act of serving a copy thereof upon the accused** (at his last known address) **or his counsel**. In a scenario where the whereabouts of the accused are unknown (as when he is at large), the recording satisfies the requirement of notifying the accused of the decision wherever he may be. (Emphasis supplied)

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<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at 366, 366-A, 366-B.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at 364, 368.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at 369.

<sup>22</sup> *Pascua v. Court of Appeals*, G.R. No. 140243, 14 December 2000 and *Gonzales v. Presiding Judge*, G.R. No. 75856, 4 June 1990.

<sup>23</sup> *Supra*.



On May 8, 2023, the OCC of this Court furnished the *Sandiganbayan* Judicial Records Division and CASTRO CASTRO & ASSOCIATES and PARAOAN NUESTRO AND ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES a copy of the judgment of conviction,<sup>24</sup> and the judgment was then recorded in the Judicial Records Division's Court Docket Criminal Book, Vol. 65.<sup>25</sup> On May 9, 2023, a copy of the decision was sent to the accused via registered mail at his last known address on record.<sup>26</sup>

The promulgation in *absentia* complied with the requirements that the judgment be recorded in the criminal docket and that a copy of the decision be served upon the accused or counsel. **Thus, the Court holds that the promulgation in absentia in these cases was valid.**

At any rate, even granting *arguendo* that the promulgation in *absentia* was not valid, the course of action is the conduct of proper promulgation of the judgment in accordance with Section 6 of Rule 120, pursuant to *Pascua*, and not to readily allow the accused to avail of post-conviction remedies. The reason is that "the presence in person of the accused at the promulgation of judgment is mandatory in all cases except where the conviction is for a light offense,"<sup>27</sup> as in Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0942 and SB-17-CRM-0943 where the conviction is not for a light offense:

It thus appears that the judgment in a criminal case must be promulgated in the presence of the accused, except where it is for a light offense, in which case it may be pronounced in the presence of his counsel or representative [x x x], and except where the judgment is for acquittal, in which case the presence of the accused is not necessary [x x x]. Notably, one of the conditions of the bail given for the provisional liberty of an accused in a criminal case is that he shall surrender himself (or the bondsman shall surrender the accused) for execution of the final judgment [x x x]. **Thus, it follows that it is the responsibility of the accused to make himself available to the court upon promulgation of a judgment of conviction, and such presence is secured by his bail bond.** This amplifies the need for the presence of the accused during the promulgation of a judgment of conviction, especially if it is for a grave offense. **Obviously, a judgment of conviction cannot be executed — and the sentence meted to the accused cannot be served — without his presence. Besides, where there is no promulgation of the judgment, the right to appeal does not accrue [x x x].**<sup>28</sup> (Emphasis supplied)

While promulgation in *absentia* is allowed under the Rules in the event of the absence of the accused, despite the presence of the accused being mandatory where a judgment of conviction is not for a light offense, such failure of the accused to appear *without justifiable cause* has fatal consequences:

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<sup>24</sup> Records, Vol. 6, p. 453.

<sup>25</sup> SB-17-CRM-0942 to 0977, pp. 101-136.

<sup>26</sup> Records, Vol. 6, pp. 458-460.

<sup>27</sup> *Pascua v. Court of Appeals*, *supra* note 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

Section 6. *Promulgation of judgment.* — [x x x].

x x x x

If the judgment is for conviction and the failure of the accused to appear was without justifiable cause, **he shall lose the remedies available in these Rules against the judgment and the court shall order his arrest. Within fifteen (15) days from promulgation of judgment, however, the accused may surrender and file a motion for leave of court to avail of these remedies.** He shall state the reasons for his absence at the scheduled promulgation and **if he proves that his absence was for a justifiable cause, he shall be allowed to avail of said remedies within fifteen (15) days from notice.**<sup>29</sup> (Emphasis supplied)

Thus, the measure to correct an invalid promulgation *in absentia* is the proper promulgation of the judgment of conviction, requiring the accused to appear, and not for the Court to simply allow the accused to avail of post-conviction remedies. **Nonetheless, as explained above, the promulgation in absentia in these cases was valid.**

For his failure to appear at the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment despite notice, without any sufficient explanation therefor, **accused Ampatuan's absence was without justifiable cause, thus, he had lost the remedies available in the Rules against the judgment of conviction. He had lost his standing in court.** In the Order dated May 5, 2023, the Court ordered the issuance of warrants of arrest against him and his co-accused and forfeited their respective surety bonds, effectively canceling their bail bonds.

Where the accused fails to appear at the promulgation of judgment despite notice, without justifiable cause, and the judgment is for conviction,<sup>30</sup> the accused shall lose the remedies available under the Rules of Court against the judgment—(1) **the filing of a motion for new trial or reconsideration** (Rule 121), and (2) **an appeal from the judgment of conviction** (Rule 122).<sup>31</sup> It is incumbent upon the accused, therefore, to appear at the scheduled date of promulgation of judgment, for such determines the availability of the possible remedies against the judgment of conviction. When the accused on bail fail to present themselves at the promulgation of a judgment of conviction, they are considered to have lost their standing in court. Without any standing in court, the accused cannot invoke its jurisdiction to seek relief.<sup>32</sup>

*Jaylo v. Sandiganbayan*<sup>33</sup> is instructive on how the accused may regain their standing in court:

<sup>29</sup> Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rule 120, Sec. 6, fourth paragraph.

<sup>30</sup> Except where the conviction is for a light offense, in which case the accused may appear through counsel or representative.

<sup>31</sup> *Villena v. People*, G.R. No. 184091, 31 January 2011.

<sup>32</sup> *Jaylo v. Sandiganbayan*, G.R. Nos. 183152-54, 21 January 2015.

<sup>33</sup> *Supra*.

It is well to note that Section 6, Rule 120 [x x x] also provides the remedy by which the accused who were absent during the promulgation may reverse the forfeiture of the remedies available to them against the judgment of conviction. **In order to regain their standing in court, the accused must do as follows: 1) surrender and 2) file a motion for leave of court to avail of the remedies, stating the reasons for their absence, within 15 days from the date of the promulgation of judgment.** (Emphasis and underscoring supplied)

The accused shall *only* be allowed to avail of the remedies under the Rules, within a *separate* 15-day period from notice, *after* compliance with these twin requirements, *viz.*: (1) surrender; and (2) file a motion for leave of court to avail of the remedies, with proof that the absence at the promulgation was for a justifiable cause, both within 15 days from promulgation of judgment. In *Jaylo*, the term “**surrender**” means the act of “**physically and voluntarily submitting** [x x x] to the jurisdiction of the court to **suffer the consequences of the judgment.**” Upon surrender, the accused must request permission of the court to avail of the remedies by making clear the reasons for the absence at the promulgation.<sup>34</sup>

However, accused Ampatuan failed to surrender within 15 days from the promulgation of judgment or from May 8, 2023 when the judgment of conviction was recorded in the criminal docket and a copy thereof was served upon his counsels. Neither did he file a motion for leave of court to avail of the remedies under the Rules, with proof that his absence at the promulgation was for a justifiable cause. Instead, he filed the present *Manifestation with Motion*.

This is not the first time that the said accused failed to appear before this Court at the promulgation of judgment despite notice, as well as failed to comply with the twin requirements to regain his standing in court. On January 13, 2023, at the promulgation of judgment in Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0762 to SB-17-CRM-0777, he was likewise absent despite notice. On January 19, 2023, the Court issued a warrant for his arrest,<sup>35</sup> which remains unserved to this day. In said cases, the Court convicted him of eight (8) counts of violation of Section 3(e) of Republic Act No. 3019 and eight (8) counts of falsification of public documents under Article 171, paragraph 4, of the Revised Penal Code. In a Resolution<sup>36</sup> dated January 31, 2023, the Court denied his *Motion (To Reinstate the Right of the Accused to Avail of Post-Conviction Remedies)* and ruled that “he had lost and failed to regain his standing in court.”<sup>37</sup>

The Court explained therein:

<sup>34</sup> *Supra* note 32, citing *Villena v. People*, *supra* note 31.

<sup>35</sup> SB-17-CRM-0762 to 0777, Records, Vol. 7, p. 511.

<sup>36</sup> SB-17-CRM-0762 to 0777, Records, Vol. 8, pp. 24-33.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.* at 31 (Resolution dated January 31, 2023, p. 8).



[x x x]. Thus, in view of his failure to appear during the promulgation, despite the denial of his motion to reset, he lost the remedies available to him against the judgment of conviction.

x x x

However, the accused-movant did not surrender within 15 days from the date of the promulgation of judgment on January 13, 2023. **The reason therefor is not difficult to fathom, for he is a fugitive from justice with standing warrants of arrest and prior judgments of conviction rendered by the *Sandiganbayan*.**

In Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-1023, SB-17-CRM-1024, SB-17-CRM-1025 to SB-17-CRM-1080, SB-17-CRM-1090, and SB-17-CRM-1092 to SB-17-CRM-1097, **the *Sandiganbayan* Fourth Division convicted the accused-movant in a Decision dated March 22, 2019.** In SB-17-CRM-1024, the Fourth Division imposed the penalty of *reclusion perpetua*. On November 7, 2019, the Fourth Division canceled his bail bond and issued a warrant for his arrest. **On appeal, the Supreme Court affirmed his convictions in said cases in *People v. Ampatuan and Abpi, Al Haj* [G.R. Nos. 250202 & 250222-85, 17 August 2022], and denied his motion for review seeking for the reversal of the order canceling his bail bond and ordering his arrest.**

In Criminal Case Nos. SB-19-CRM-0012 to SB-19-CRM-0015, SB-19-CRM-0017 to SB-19-CRM-0019, and SB-19-CRM-0020, **the *Sandiganbayan* First Division convicted the accused-movant in a Decision dated October 10, 2022.** In SB-19-CRM-0017 to SB-19-CRM-0019, the First Division imposed the penalty of *reclusion perpetua* for each of the three counts. On November 7, 2022, the First Division canceled his bail bond and issued a warrant for his arrest.

**Both standing warrants of arrest remain unserved to this day.**

As for the second requirement, the accused-movant did not file a motion for leave of court. Instead, he merely filed a *Motion (To Reinstate the Right of the Accused to Avail of Post-Conviction Remedies)*. That he attached therewith a notarized medical certificate for his alleged medical condition is of no moment. As this Court pronounced in the Minute Resolution dated January 11, 2023 denying his motion to reset the promulgation of judgment:

To this Court, the issue is not whether the accused-movant has a medical condition at the moment but, rather, it is whether he has the intention to personally appear at the promulgation of judgment in the present cases, if the date therefor is reset, with the certainty of being arrested and incarcerated in view of his conviction in the above-mentioned separate cases.

His motion is silent on the matter. There is not even any mention therein of his conviction by the Fourth Division, much less of the fact that the Supreme Court had already denied his appeal and affirmed his conviction.

In fact, even his present motion does not bother to mention the standing warrants of arrest against him as a result of his prior convictions, much less of any intention to surrender.

**To this Court, the real reason for his failure to appear during the promulgation was not his alleged medical condition but, rather, the fact that his personal appearance thereat would lead to his arrest and incarceration because of the standing warrants of arrest against him.** The Court finds that he is merely taking refuge under his alleged medical condition, using it as an excuse, and that the lack of any reference to such standing warrants of arrest and prior convictions in the present motion, like in the motion to reset, smacks of bad faith on his part.

**Thus, considering the circumstances, the accused-moved failed to prove that his absence during the promulgation of judgment was for a justifiable cause. Therefore, he had lost and failed to regain his standing in court.**<sup>38</sup> (Additional emphasis supplied)

**In fine, accused Ampatuan had lost his standing in court as a consequence of his failure to appear, without justifiable cause, at the promulgation of judgment, and he had failed to regain such standing by not complying with the twin requirements under Section 6, last paragraph, of Rule 120. Bereft of standing in court, he cannot invoke its jurisdiction to seek relief.**

Another procedural consequence of the failure of the accused to regain his standing in court has been explained in *Jaylo*,

The Sandiganbayan was correct in not taking cognizance of the Motion for Partial Reconsideration filed by counsel for petitioners. While the motion was filed on 30 April 2007, it did not operate to regain the standing of petitioners in court. [x x x].

**For the failure of petitioners to regain their standing in court and avail themselves of the remedies against the judgment of conviction, the Decision of the Sandiganbayan attained finality 15 days reckoned from 17 April 2007 [promulgation of judgment],** (Emphasis and bracketed insertion supplied)

and in *Villena v. People*:<sup>39</sup>

It is only upon petitioners' valid surrender, and only after proper motion, that they can avail of the remedy of appeal. Absent compliance with these requirements, their notices of appeal, the initiatory step to appeal from their conviction, were properly denied due course.

x x x x

**What is more, the judgment of conviction against petitioners had already acquired finality. [T]hey had only 15 days from the date of promulgation of judgment within which to surrender and to file the required motion for leave of court to avail of the remedies against the judgment. As the judgment was promulgated on September 3, 2007, petitioners had only until September 18, 2007 to comply with the mandatory requirements of the said rule.** (Emphasis supplied)

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<sup>38</sup> *Id.* at 30-31 (*Id.* at 7-8).

<sup>39</sup> *Supra* note 31.

Considering that the judgment of conviction was recorded in the criminal docket and a copy thereof was served upon the accused's counsels on May 8, 2023, he had only until May 23, 2023 to comply with the twin requirements under Section 6, last paragraph, of Rule 120 in order to regain his standing in court. *Sans* the accused regaining his standing in court in these cases, the judgment had acquired finality thereafter.

In sum, the manifestation is noted but the motion praying that the accused be allowed to avail of post-conviction remedies and that he be given 15 days to file a motion for reconsideration is denied.


**WHEREFORE**, in light of the foregoing premises, in respect of the *Manifestation with Motion* dated May 8, 2023 of accused Datu Sajid Islam U. Ampatuan, the manifestation is **NOTED** while the motion is **DENIED** for lack of merit.

The issuance of the corresponding Warrant of Arrest against him is hereby reiterated. The cancellation of his bail bond in Criminal Case Nos. SB-17-CRM-0942 and SB-17-CRM-0943 **STANDS**.

**SO ORDERED.**

  
**MARYANN E. CORPUS-MAÑALAC**  
Associate Justice

**WE CONCUR:**

  
**RAFAEL R. LAGOS**  
Associate Justice  
Chairperson

  
**MARIA THERESA V. MENDOZA-ARCEGA**  
Associate Justice