

**EN BANC**

**[ A.M. No. 98-10-138-MTCC, April 21, 1999 ]**

**RE: CASES LEFT UNDECIDED BY JUDGE NARCISO M. BUMANGLAG, JR.**

**D E C I S I O N****PURISIMA, J.:**

The Code of Judicial Conduct imposes upon judges the duty to decide and dispose cases promptly within the periods required by law.<sup>[1]</sup> Section 15, Article VIII of the 1987 Constitution of this country mandates lower courts to decide or resolve cases or matters within three (3) months from date of submission for decision or final resolution. Failure to decide cases within the 90-day reglementary period may warrant imposition of administrative sanction on the erring judge.<sup>[2]</sup>

On August 17, 1998, upon reaching the compulsory retirement age of 70 years, Judge Narciso M. Bumanglag, Jr. retired as Presiding Judge of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities, Branch 1, Davao City. In view of the retirement of respondent Judge, the Office of the Court Administrator directed the Branch Clerk of Court of the said Municipal Trial Court in Cities to conduct an inventory and submit a report on the cases submitted for decision before the respondent judge who did not decide the same before his retirement.

On August 25, 1988, Branch Clerk of Court Salvacion C. Balasa sent in a Certification<sup>[3]</sup> stating as follows:

Case Number	Date Submitted for	Due Date of Decision
	Decision	

**Criminal Cases**

47, 625-A-97	2/10/98	5/11/98
5861-E-93	2/13/98	5/14/98
5680-E-93	2/13/98	5/14/98
47,637-A-97	2/24/98	5/25/98
47,639-A-97	2/24/98	5/25/98
45,133-A-96	2/25/98	5/26/98
45,134-A-97	2/25/98	5/26/98

**Civil Cases**

3764-A-97	3/27/98	6/25/98
4043-A-97	4/17/98	7/16/98
4193-A-97	7/20/98	9/18/98