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**INCREASE IN ANTI-DRUG OPERATIONS AND ARRESTS POSTED IN 2017**  
**More government workers involved in illegal drug trade**

The Philippines' drug law enforcement has posted a significant increase in the number of anti-drug operations and arrest of drug personalities for operational year 2017.

From January 1 to December 31, 2017, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), the country's lead agency against illegal drugs, in collaboration with the Philippine National Police (PNP), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and other law enforcement agencies (OLEAs), have conducted a total of 38,830 anti-drug operations that led to the arrest of 75,008 drug personalities.

"This is 14 percent more than the operations conducted in 2016. As a result of the increase, the number of arrested drug offenders likewise grew by 167.35 percent from 28,056 in 2016 to 75,008 in 2017," said PDEA Director General Aaron N. Aquino.

Out of the arrested drug personalities in 2017, 301 are government workers composed of 129 elected officials, 27 uniformed personnel and 145 government employees.

"More and more unscrupulous government workers are involved in the country's illegal drug trade as shown in the rising number of arrested state workers each succeeding year," Aquino said.

From 2011 to 2017, a total of 1,155 government workers were arrested for violation of Republic Act 9165, or “The Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002”: 301 in 2017, 231 in 2016, 201 in 2015, 190 in 2014, 138 in 2013, 65 in 2012 and 29 in 2011.

If these arrested drug personalities are found guilty, the maximum penalty of the anti-drug law shall be imposed upon them, in addition to absolute perpetual disqualification from any public office.

“The significant increase in the arrest of government workers means that authorities are hot on their trails. We must restore trust and confidence of the people in the capacities of their government. In this way, we can achieve real success in the national anti-drug campaign,” the PDEA chief said.

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