

GOTCHA

JARIUS BONDOC



Fake money spreading again as Christmas nears

As cash transactions intensify nearing Christmas, so does cash counterfeiting. Be alert. Color photocopying, printing, and papermaking have become so sophisticated that the inattentive easily can be duped. Some tips on detecting fake pesos:

- Compare the color with other bills in the wad. Fake cash would be slightly brighter or faded than the genuine. Despite new technologies, counterfeiters still cannot copy the exact money color. More so, because of the security features, expounded below.

- All the bills in the wad may be of similar hue, so check the serial numbers too. Fakes would have duplicating numbers. Too bothersome for counterfeiters to print or mix in a wad fakes of differing numbers.

- Scratch the images on the bill. If it's fake, the ink could crack, smear, and chip off.

- Feel the bill. Even if of special paper,

All Philippine notes have embedded security thread. On 20- and 50-peso bills the thread is 2mm wide. On 100-, 200-, 500-, and 1,000-bills, it is 4mm. Appearing stitched and metallic, the 4mm security thread changes color depending on the angle. The denomination and "BSP" letterings are printed repeatedly in small font. The back of the thread also has repeated "BSP" micro-prints.

The 500- and 1,000-notes have a reflective round hologram patch on the front left part. An optically variable device (OVD), the patch changes color when the bill is tilted left or right, up or down. It contains a small BSP (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) logo. There is an image of a blue-naped parrot on the 500-bill, and of a south sea pearl on the 1,000. The OVD cannot be scanned or photocopied, nor accurately replicated or reproduced.

Serial numbers have two prefix letters and six to seven numeral digits, in increasing size. Embedded red and

Some tips to easily detect counterfeits.

the fake would be thinner and smoother than the genuine, made of slightly rough cotton and abaca.

- Wet the bill with a wee drop of water, then rub the paper. The fake will easily tear, and the color would smudge.

- View the blank white space against the light; the watermark should appear, easier seen under an ultraviolet lamp. Fakes have no watermark.

The peso's design and security features make counterfeiting tough and costly. Like, the cotton and abaca fabric has ridges that feel rough on the finger. The images are raised; the text "Republika ng Pilipinas" at the top, and the amount in words and in numerals at the bottom are embossed. Viewed against the light, the watermark matches the image on the left, and the denomination on the right.

blue hair-like fibers can be seen under the U/V lamp. Ancient "Baybayin" letters can be seen when the bill is viewed against the light. A concealed denomination appears on the upper left side of the portrait when the bill is slightly tilted.

It would be wise to check the bills in front of the source, and return them if inconsistencies are found. This would protect you from suspicion of later passing off counterfeit money.

PARA sa mga may SASAKYAN and or DRIVERS

Message from the Police:

If you are driving at night and eggs are thrown at your windshield, do not stop to check the car, do not operate the wiper, and do not spray any water. Eggs mixed with water become milky and severely block your vision. You are then forced to stop on the roadside, and be victimized by criminals.

Best to just slow down and look for a bright populated zone, like a gas station, to stop and clean up. Take a photo or video with your device, report to the nearest police precinct or barangay hall, and post on social media the spot where you were pelted.

Please tell your family and friends about this modus operandi of street gangs and highwaymen – and the security precautions.