



Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Press Release

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CHED: BEST has no authority to grant *honoris causa*

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) strongly warns the public that schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning that have not been issued government authority to operate cannot grant honorary degrees to individuals.

The announcement comes after news reports over the weekend that the Brethren Evangelical School of Theology (BEST) in Gapan, Nueva Ecija conferred a Ph.D. in Humanities, major in Social Work to actor-model Daniel Matsunaga. Based on CHED records, the school has never applied for an authority to operate from the Commission and is not recognized as a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the Philippines.

The awarding of *honoris causa* to individuals by BEST violates the policies and guidelines set forth under CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 19, series of 2014 or the "Enhanced Policies and Guidelines on the Conferment of Honorary Doctorate Degrees by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)". The CMO stipulates that only HEIs that existed for at least 25 years and possess a well-acknowledged academic reputation, institutional values and mission, among others, can confer honorary doctorate degrees.

The public is hereby advised that the awarding of an Honorary Doctorate Degree or *Honoris Causa* by Brethren Evangelical School of Theology to any person will not be recognized by the Commission on Higher Education.

CHED shall impose the necessary sanctions against BEST in relation to the offering of degree programs upon compliance with the due process of law.

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