

**DESPITE TRAVEL BAN**

# 29 PNP officers to leave for LA

*It's needed for 'promotion' – official*

by **ABIGAIL KWOK**  
Inquirer.net

**M**ANILA Twenty-nine, not 37, police officers left for Los Angeles Friday night, October 17, despite the travel suspension issued by Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Jesus Verzosa on Thursday, an official said.

Director German Doria of the PNP human resource and doctrine development clarified reports that 37 PNP officers will be leaving. He said other officers' visas are still pending approval and only 29 have been provided with visas for the trip. He added that the remaining PNP officers would be following to Los Angeles once they have been issued visas.

But Doria said the trip was needed by the police officers to complete a six-month long Officers Senior Executive Course (OSEC) at the Philippine Public Safety College (PPSC). The OSEC is a requirement to be promoted to Senior Superintendent.

"This is needed for them to graduate from the course. Kasama sa [It is part of the] Program of Instruction (PoI) that requires them to go abroad. Ito yung pinaka-last na mandatory course ng opisyal para ma-promote sila [This is the final mandatory course of offi-

cial before they can be promoted to Senior Superintendent," he said.

Doria also said that the 29 police officers would be going solely to the seminar conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

"Ito naka-arrange na eh [This one has been arranged]. Unang-una naka-red passport sila [First and foremost, they have red passports]. They are official visitors. Diplomatic passports sila [They have diplomatic passports]. It's part of their training," he said.

However, Doria was not certain if the trip would be of no cost to the PNP, contrary to what Chief Superintendent Nicanor Bartolome, PNP spokesman, had said.

"Gusto ko lang klaruhin, ang nag-coconduct ng training ay PPSC under president Margarita Cojuangco [Let me clarify that the training is being conducted by the PNP under President Margarita Cojuangco]. Yung pondo para sa course na yan ay nasa [Funds for this course are with the] PPSC. Pero alam ko may counterpart ang PNP [But I also know that there is a counterpart fund from the PNPI]," Doria said.

"Hindi ko masyadong alam pero...nung nag-travel kami noon, binigyan kami [I don't exactly know... but we were given money when we travelled that time]. When I took

up the same schooling, nag-travel kami sa [we travelled to] Australia, meron kaming konting [we have some] allowances from PNP," he added.

The police officers left for Los Angeles 10 pm, Friday, October 17. But before their departure, they were required to undergo a short seminar to orient them on customs policies and immigration laws. This was done after retired director for comptroller-ship Eliseo dela Paz was held briefly at the Moscow Airport after failing to declare millions of pesos worth in euros.

"Hindi kayo pwedeng magdala ng more than [You cannot bring more than] P10,000. Kung may sobra kayo, iwan niyo muna sa akin [If you have extra, leave them with me first]," Doria quipped during the orientation.

Doria reiterated that it was not the PNP that required the police officers to go to LA but PPSC.

"I would like to make clear na hindi ang [it was not the] PNP ang nagdedemand na magpunta sila sa [that demanded that they should go] abroad," he added.

At the same time, Doria said he now urged Verzosa to hasten the investigation on the incident to allow other officers bound for training abroad to leave. ■

## E-voting for 2010 to be announced

by **SHEILA CRISOSTOMO**  
Philstar.com

THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) is expected to announce the type of electronic voting to be used for the 2010 general elections at the end of the month, following the recommendation of the Advisory Council on Poll Automation.

"The Council had asked to be given until the end of the month to study this matter. We're waiting for their recommendations," Comelec Chairman Jose Melo said.

The Comelec advisory council is studying the use of direct recording electronics (DRE) and optical mark reader (OMR), which were both utilized in the recent elections at the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Melo, however, said their initial meetings with the Council revealed the DRE technology is impractical in remote or sparsely populated areas.

He said the Council is now studying the use of OMR in remote voting areas.

The DRE technology is fully automated from voting to counting to canvassing. In the OMR method, voters choose their candidates by manually shading the blank oval shapes beside the names of their candidates. The votes are counted and canvassed by the machines.

The Comelec tested these machines during the ARMM elections and were satisfied with the results.

In areas where DRE was used, the results came out within 48 hours while for OMR, winners were declared within a week.

Melo noted that full use of DRE is "not cost effective" in far-flung areas, where the Comelec might use the OMR instead.

The Comelec is proposing a budget of P21 billion for the automation of the 2010 polls.

"We'll see what's best for us in 2010. We are studying this carefully," he said. ■

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