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ATTY. MICHAEL GURFINKEL

CBP trains air carriers to spot fraudulent travel documents

spot fake/fraudulent visas). The purpose of this training is to reduce the numbers of improperly documented individuals who are boarding aircraft destined for the US.

In the past, people have tried a wide variety of tricks and schemes to enter the US without proper travel documentation. This would include photo-substituted passports, (containing legitimate visas, in someone else's name, but containing the photo of the person using the

passport), fake green cards, fake ADIT (temporary) stamp in the passport, and the like. Under this program, airline employees would already be able to spot or identify such fraudulent travel documents or improper visas or green cards, such that the person would not even be allowed to board the plane to the US. Even if a person was "lucky enough" to fool the airline employees, he would still be inspected at the port of entry (airport) by CBP officers. The

new program is an additional measure to stop passengers with fraudulent documentation from even getting on board the plane, thus avoiding "an airport to airport" expedited removal at the US airport.

If you are planning to go to the US, I would suggest you seek the advice of a reputable attorney, who can advise you on lawful and legitimate ways to enter the US. Under no circumstance should you use fraudulent or questionable documentation,

not only because it is wrong, but is likely that you would be caught either at your departure airport or at the port of entry in the US and face a possible lifetime ban from ever coming to the US.

Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different. The information contained herein (including testimonials,

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BSP turns cautious on easing monetary policy

by MICHELLE REMO
Inquirer.net

MANILA—The central bank, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), said it would be less aggressive in easing monetary policy, saying it had already taken several measures to ensure sufficient liquidity in the system.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said that while there was still room for further easing of monetary policy, the central bank would do so in a "prudent and calibrated" manner.

"The BSP has already reduced its key policy rates and reserve requirement on banks, and implemented measures to improve access to rediscounting facility. Any move toward further easing would have to be done in a measured approach," Tetangco told reporters.

He also noted the need to consider inflationary pressures when relaxing monetary policy. He said that although inflation as measured by the rise in the consumer price index was expected to remain within official targets this year and the next, inflationary risks—including volatility of oil prices—lingered.

Inflation is targeted to average 2.5-4.5 percent this year and 3.5-5.5 percent next year.

Since December, the BSP has already cut its key policy rates by a total of 125 basis points.

Its overnight borrowing and lending rates now stand at 4.75 and 6.75 percent.

The policy rate reduction was aimed at encouraging banks to lend more of their funds, instead of just depositing their money in the central bank. It is also hoped to influence banks to reduce the interest rates they charge on

their loans.

In November, the BSP slashed the reserve requirement for banks from 21 percent to 19 percent of their deposit liabilities. This was estimated to have made available P60 billion in additional liquidity.

Also, Tetangco said the national government had implemented its own pump-priming measures which, he said, must be considered by the central bank when coming up with new monetary policies in the future. The government's economic

managers earlier unveiled a P330-billion stimulus package which was hoped to help the country hit its growth target despite the global crisis.

The government is projecting 3.7-4.4 percent growth in the economy this year. ■



Amando Tetangco Jr.

P&G launches 'Taba' packaging

by ABIGAIL L. HO
Inquirer.net

MANILA—Many say the Philippines is relatively recession-proof, but Filipino housewives don't seem to agree.

They continue to scrimp and explore ways to maximize their peso. One way to stretch their budgets, it appears, is by doing laundry in one go each week.

As a result, Procter & Gamble Philippines president and general manager James Lafferty said sales of laundry detergent by P&G and the industry as a whole had dropped five percent over the past months.

"Consumers seem to be adding more clothes to one load," Lafferty said at a news briefing. "This saves water and detergent. If they want to stretch the product, that's great. But we're giving them extra to enable them to still get clothes that are fresh, with all the stains removed."

This gave rise to P&G's P1-billion initiative, the Taba packaging initiative for their laundry brands.

Under this initiative, P&G will increase the volume of the three brands by 14 to 35 percent without raising their current suggested retail prices. The campaign will last six months.

original 70-gram Tide Original Scent and Lemon Clean variants will now come in an 80-gram bag, at the same price. Mr. Clean Calamansi, originally packed in 60-gram sachets, will now contain 15 percent more powder at 69 grams.

The sachet volumes of Ariel Oxybleach will increase 20 percent from 45 grams to 54 grams, Ariel Freshness of Downy by 35 percent from 40 grams to 54 grams, and Ariel Ultramatic Oxybleach by 20 percent from 60 grams to 72 grams.

"We believe it's the right thing to do for the business and for the consumers. It's a bold initiative, but we needed to make bold choices to get the vote of the consumers when they go to the stores," Lafferty said.

He said P&G felt that more than giving price discounts for a short promotional period, increasing the value of a product by providing more of it to consumers while keeping prices stable was the better path to choose.

"This will have a great effect on the market, especially with consumers now consolidating bigger loads and even splitting sachets. It provides better value for consumers," he said. ■

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BUSINESS

Quote of the Week

"Definitely there will be a big adjustment in the new projects. We want to observe how the energy or the electricity market grows in 2009 before we decide on a new power plant. Clearly, any new projects and, again, depending on where they are, will probably slow down."

—Erramon Isidro Aboitiz,
CEO of Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.
(AEV) speaking to BusinessMirror on the effects of the economic crisis on his company