

GMA keeps government's focus on jobs creation

GEN. SANTOS CITY—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said here last May 19 her administration keeps its focus on jobs creation to address the immediate concerns of workers who lost their jobs or who remain unemployed because of the global economic meltdown.

The President who visited and held her Cabinet meeting in this "Tuna capital" said the beneficiaries of her job creation and livelihood assistance initiatives include many workers from Central Mindanao, many of whom are fisherfolks and out-of-school youths.

She said retrenched and jobless workers in Central Mindanao now benefit from Comprehensive Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (CLEEP) administered by the Department of Labor and Employment.

The beneficiaries, she said, have availed of emergency employment opportunities under the Tulong Panghanap-buhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) and Integrated Services for Livelihood Advancement of the Fisherfolks (ISLA) projects.

In a regional media interview here, President Arroyo said jobs generation remains a special government focus and even the forthcoming 111th Independence Day celebration will be focused on assisting displaced workers.

The Independence Day rites will be highlighted by the conduct of a three-day job and livelihood fairs that will include the awarding of employment certificates, livelihood assistance packages and training scholarships.

On the Jobs Fair's first day, she said, job seekers may vie for a good number of government unfilled plantilla positions and vacancies for emergency or short term employment under the 1.5 percent MOOE fund based on E.O. No. 782.

Emergency employment contracts and livelihood checks will also be awarded on June 12 to lucky job seekers. The rest of them may explore both overseas and local job opportunities on the second and third day.

During the interview, President Arroyo shared the good news with her listeners that DOLE, in its latest report said 14,021 employees earlier retrenched by their local employers got their jobs back as companies hit by the economic slump have started to rehire their workers with new product orders having started to come in.

DOLE also said business firms are slowly returning to their normal operations, even as the demand for OFWs continues with new hires narrowing the gap if not offsetting the number of those earlier displaced as the situation in many countries appear to have stabilized. (PND)

Arroyo names 7 new envoys

WITH a little more than a year left in office, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has named seven new ambassadors—to Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain, the Vatican, the Netherlands, Finland, Brazil and Timor-Leste.

This was disclosed by Cebu Representative Eduardo Gullas, in a statement to media outfits last May 19.

"We just received the nomination papers of Ana Ines de Sequera-Ugarte as the new ambassador to Spain and Andorra, vice Antonio Manuel Lagdameo, who has been designated chief emissary to the UK and Northern Ireland," said Gullas, who is also CA vice chairman.

De Sequera-Ugarte is widow of Aboitiz scion and advertising executive Inaki Ugarte.

Lagdameo, who obtained the CA's consent as top envoy to Madrid only in June last year, replaces Edgardo Espiritu, the

former finance secretary who has been ambassador to the Court of St. James since 2003.

Gullas said the other ambassadors nominated by Malacañang were Mercedes Arrastia-Tuason, to the Holy See and Malta; Carido Luna, to the Netherlands; Evan Garcia, to Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, and Suriname; Ma. Angelina Sta. Catalina, to Finland; and Ma. Aniceta Aileen Bugarin, to Timor-Leste.

Arrastia-Tuason fills the post

vacated by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile's wife, Cristina Castañer-Ponce Enrile, who suddenly resigned last month for health reasons.

Gullas said the seven new nominees join three other ambassadors pending CA confirmation—former Armed Forces chief of staff and retired Gen. Alexander Yano, to Brunei; Alejandro Del Rosario, to Poland; and Ma. Corazon Yap-Buhain, to Bahrain. (Inquirer.net)

Escudero: Do Pinoy expats have right to vote?

by MAIA AGER
Inquirer.net

SHOULD "third generation Filipinos" or those born or who have practically lived abroad be given the right to participate in the national elections?

This question was raised by Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero on Tuesday, May 19 during the hearing on various bills, proposing amendments to the Absentee Voting Law.

Escudero is chairman of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments conducting the hearing together with the committees on environment, foreign relations and finance.

"Just a point of information or advice, in so far as Filipinos who were born here, Filipinos who lived here for quite sometime before they left for greener pastures abroad, mostly sa United States of America, sila po naaalala pa kaya nila ang Pilipinas? May nararamdaman pa kayang pagka-miss at pagkamahal nila sa ating bansa?" [Do they still remember our country? Do they still miss and love their country?]

he said, directing his question to Ellene Sana, executive director of Center for Migrant Workers.

He urged her to address the issue with her group so the Senate committee can study the issue of second generation or third generation Filipinos who were born

abroad or those who left the country at an early age to have no memory of the Philippines, citing those who spoke English better than Americans and, when asked

about their nationality, would answer they were Americans.

Escudero said the issue was an "area of concern" and that the group should look into it. ■



Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero takes a light moment while stressing a point during the ANC Leadership Forum held at the Ateneo de Manila University on May 11, 2009.

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