



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION
MAGALLANES DRIVE, INTRAMUROS
1002 MANILA

04 July 2012

MS. ELLEN TORDESILLAS

Columnist

Abante

#167 Liberty Building, Roberto S. Oca St.

Port Area, 1018 Manila

Email: ellentordesillas@gmail.com

Dear **Ms. Tordesillas**:

This is with reference to your article entitled ***"Hindi "fun" pagdating sa NAIA I"*** on 02 July 2012, recounting your unpleasant experience of long queue of disembarking passengers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal I-arrival area last Saturday, 30 June 2012.

At the onset, we would like to unequivocally reaffirm the commitment of the Bureau of Immigration (BI) in supporting the Department of Tourism (DOT) in its intensive drive to promote tourism in the country through *"Its More Fun In the Philippines Tourism Campaign"*. We acknowledged our crucial role in this aspect being the first receiver of foreign visitors in our port of entries.

It is in this connection that we would like to express our sincere apologies on this incident and likewise thank you for bringing this to our attention, for disposition and appropriate action. This also gave us the rare opportunity to shed light on the reasons of the occurrence of accumulation of passengers at NAIA Terminal I during the last flight duty schedule or from 1700H to 0100H as well as to inform you of the current undertakings of the Bureau in addressing this dilemma.

Please be informed that the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) has commenced implementing a seven-month partial closure of the NAIA due to runway repairs from January to August 2012 from 00:30H to 05:30H, affecting departing and arriving flights at the NAIA. Consequentially, all airlines are compelled to arrive and depart at the NAIA runway before 00:30H. Specifically for NAIA Terminal I, this resulted to nineteen (19) succeeding flight arrivals from 2120H to 0010H. Moreover, the buildup of passengers became more obvious due to the limited space allotted for passengers at the immigration arrival area, where primary inspection can only be conducted, with the placement of three (3) additional counters. Thus, we would like to clarify that this concern does not involve at all the issue on overtime payment for our personnel.

Presently, we are reinforcing our human resource capability. The undersigned initiated the creation of one hundred (100) Immigration Officer (IO) I items, which was favorably approved by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), through the endorsement of the Office of the President (OP).

For CY 2012, we have already deployed forty nine (49) new regular Immigration Officer I at the NAIA, who underwent the rigid training on *Basic Immigration Officers Course* at the Philippine Immigration Academy (PIA). Despite this development, we still lack IOs at the NAIA as other senior Officers were reassigned to other international airports and immigration offices in the country, including our border crossing stations. However, we have developed and implemented an enhanced duty schedule for our IOs and Acting IOs in order to maximize their utilization.

With your observations noted, the undersigned have already instructed Mr. Benito G. Se, Jr., *Acting Chief*, AOD, to closely coordinate with the NAIA Terminal I Manager for the construction of bigger and more visible signages to better guide our arriving passengers. Currently, all of the 20 immigration counters have electronically generated signage arranged by the MIAA. Counters 1 and 2 are designated for passengers in wheelchair and People With Disability (PWD). Counters 3 to 10 are for visitors and all other typologies of passengers. Counters 11 and 12 are for diplomatic and official passport holders as well as those with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Travel Cards (BTCs) while Counters 13 to 20 are exclusively designated for Filipino nationals.

We hope that we have elucidated on the matter and further commit to provide more efficient immigration service in our international airports.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,



RICARDO A. DAVID, JR.
Commissioner

Copy Furnished:

BENITO G. SE, JR.
Acting Chief, AOD

MR. DANTE BASANTA
Terminal Manager
NAIA Terminal I
MIAA, Pasay City