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MANILA -- There are still no plans for now to implement a ban on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Hong Kong, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said Wednesday.

“Not yet. Wala pa naman (There is no) advice (yet) from DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs). Of course, may (there is an) advisory addressed not necessarily to OFWs, who plan to go there, to discourage them from proceeding there for the meantime,” Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said in an interview.

Bello was referring to those who are planning to go on trips to the Chinese autonomous region for leisure and other non-essential purposes.

"Kung maaring i-postpone muna yung kanilang mga trips kasi hindi natin masiguro ang situation doon (If possible, they should postpone their trips because we cannot assure the situation there)," Bello added.

With only over two months to go before Christmas, Bello said it is up for OFWs if they want to leave in the country or go back to their jobs in the former British colony.

He, however, reiterated his call to Filipinos working there not to join mass actions and stay away from places where rallies are being held.

“Ang importante lang naman doon (What is important there) is the usual. That they don’t wear black and white. They do not join protest actions,” Bello added.

Tension continues to escalate in the island as residents continue to hold protests despite the scrapping of a proposal that would have allowed extraditions of criminal

suspects to mainland China.

Protester stormed and vandalized mass transit facilities, which earlier led to a suspension of its operations for a few days. (PNA)

Marikina starts 'Nutribun' program for kinder, Grade 1 pupils

MANILA -- To ensure that the health and nutrition needs of its kindergarten and Grade 1 pupils in public schools are met, the Marikina City government on Wednesday started the implementation of the Nutribun program.

Mayor Marcelino “Marcy” Teodoro led the launching of the city’s Nutribun Program at the Parang Elementary School which was attended by more than 1,000 pupils and their parents.

“Titingnan natin ang kanilang grades at performance after 120 days kung nag-improve sila sa pag-aaral. Ayon kasi sa mga pag-aaral, may relasyon ang tamang nutrisyon sa performance sa pag-aaral ng mga bata (We will check on their grades and performance after 120 days if they have improved on their studies. Based on studies, proper nutrition has something to do with the children’s academic performance),” the mayor said.

Teodoro said the bread, fortified with vitamins and minerals, and milk, will be provided free to kinder and elementary students.

Teodoro also told the parents not to solely rely on schools in providing proper nutrition to their children as they should be the ones advocating healthy eating habits.

As ordered by Teodoro, Marikina LGU will conduct a seminar on nutrition among parents to teach them the recommended food daily allowance needed by their growing children.

“Sa kanilang batang edad, talagang mapili sila sa pagkain,

picky eaters kumbaga kaya naman dapat ang i-push natin sa kanila ay balanced nutrition. Kailangan nating ituro ang tamang pagkain sa ating mga anak (At a young age, children tend to be picky. They are picky eaters that is why we must push a balanced nutrition for them. We need to teach the importance of proper diet to our children),” the mayor said.

Meanwhile, Teodoro lauded former City Councilor Judy Magtubo, head of the program, for successfully implementing all his plans on the Nutribun Program.

Magtubo said that they are also providing milk to go along with the fortified bun.

Marciana De Guzman, principal of Parang Elementary School, said the school has around 600 malnourished children.

According to the principal, they have their bakery, which they call “Nutripan.”

“Hinahaluan natin ng kalabasa ang Nutribun, minsan naman ay malunggay ang halo. May tanim kami na 50 na puno ng malunggay dito sa school kaya hindi na kami bumibili. Iyong kalabasa na lang ang binibili namin (We mix squash with the Nutribun. We have 50 malunggay plants here in school so we don’t have to buy. We only buy the squash,” De Guzman said.

The fund for the Nutribun program will be coming from the Special Nutrition Fund of Marikina City, Mayor Teodoro said.

The bread is well fortified with nutrients and was designed around a “base” product that could be modified using any number of locally available substances. (PNA)

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DOJ starts reinvestigation on 'ninja cops'

MANILA -- The Department of Justice (DOJ) on Wednesday commenced its preliminary investigation into the so-called "ninja cops" accused of drug-related charges.

During the hearing, the panel of prosecutors consisting of Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Alexander Suarez, and Assistant State Prosecutors Josie Christina Dugay and Gino Paolo S. Santiago granted the motion filed by the complainants and the respondents for more time to present additional evidence.

The parties were given five days or until October 21, the next scheduled hearing date, to submit their evidence.

The complainant, Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG), had requested an extension of time to submit additional evidence and likewise asked to be allowed to file an amended or supplemental complaint.

The CIDG was represented by Lt. Col. Joseph Orsos and lawyer Dennis Wagas. Also present were Brig. Gen. Ignatius Ferro, Brig. Gen. Bernabe Balba, Lt. Col. Julius Sagandoy and Maj. Ryan Hernandez.

Except for Maj. Rodney Raymundo Louie Juico Baloyo IV, all of the respondents were present, namely Lt. Joven De Guzman, Jr.; Senior Master Sergeants Alcindor Tinio and Eligio Valeroso; Master Sergeants Dante Dizon, Rommel Vital and Ronald Roque; Staff Sergeant Dindo Dizon; Corporals Gilbert de Vera, Jules Maniago, Romeo Guerrero Jr., and Anthony Lacsamana.

Defense counsel Dennis Muli entered his appearance for all the respondents except for Tinio, Lacsamana and Valeroso who appeared by themselves.

Muli manifested before the panel that the respondents he is representing will no longer file additional evidence but will be filing appropriate pleadings after receipt of the additional evidence of the complainant.

Last week, state prosecutors subpoenaed the 13 police officials, who were tagged in the legislative inquiry into the recycling of seized illegal drugs in Pampanga in 2013, where former Philippine National Police (PNP) chief, Gen. Oscar Albayalde, was formerly assigned as provincial police director.

Department Order No. 528 dated October 7 issued by Secretary Menardo Guevarra required the 13 police officers to participate in the "reinvestigation of the complaint and to submit any additional evidence on October 16".

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and He will flee from you.” – James 4:7