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**MANILA** – A team composed of different government officials will finalize a report on the outcome of the two-month road-clearing operations implemented by the local government units (LGUs), an official of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said on Thursday.

In a media interview, DILG Undersecretary for Operations Epimaco Densing III said validation is expected to be completed by Saturday and will be submitted to Secretary Eduardo Año upon his arrival from Russia early next week.

Though the 60-day deadline was too tight, Densing said local leaders nationwide did their best to clear the roads of obstructions.

“Thirty years of obstruction of roads and sidewalks so talagang tinapos nila (they really completed) in 60 days,” Densing told the me-

dia after the Metro Manila Council (MMC) meeting at the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) main office in Makati City.

He said the validating team is composed of representatives from the DILG, Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and non-government organizations (NGOs).

He said validation will be based on the removed obstructions along the roads and sidewalks, on revised related ordinances, on the proper transfer of vendors, rehabilitation of recovered roads and sidewalks, and road inventory for the purpose of sustainability of the program.

Densing explained that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte and the DILG will only be looking for substantial

compliance of the order and that results of the validation are still subject to discussions.

“At the end of the day, as I’ve been saying and Sec. Año is saying, substantial compliance to the presidential compliance. We cannot finish everything in 60 days,” Densing said.

During the meeting, he said the MMC also passed a resolution ordering the LGUs to enact programs to maintain cleanliness on the streets of Metro Manila.

“Most probably the next stage here is just to make sure the barangay captains maintain cleanliness,” Densing said.

In his last State of the Nation Address, Duterte asked the MMDA and local government officials to “reclaim all public roads being used for private ends” to help ease traffic congestion especially in Metro Manila.

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## BI tightens watch on foreign transit passengers

**MANILA** -- The Bureau of Immigration (BI) on Wednesday said it is strictly monitoring foreigners arriving as transit passengers to stop international syndicates that are again attempting to use Manila as a jump-off point to smuggle illegal aliens to Western countries.

Immigration Commissioner Jaime Morente has issued directives to the heads of the bureau’s Port Operations Division (POD) and Travel Control and Enforcement Unit (TCEU) to tighten their watch on foreigners.

“We should not allow these syndicates to negate the gains we made by letting them use our airports as venues for facilitating the entry of illegal aliens to other countries,” Morente said in his directive.

The BI chief also ordered the TCEU to thoroughly screen transiting passengers before allowing them to board their connecting flights to make sure that they are legitimate travelers with valid documents.

“Transiting passengers caught with spurious visas and other fraudulent travel documents should not be allowed to proceed to their intended destinations,” Morente said in his directive to BI-TCEU chief Timotea Barizo.

The issuance of the directives stemmed from reports that three foreign transit passengers with bogus travel papers were intercepted at the NAIA last month before they could board their connecting flights.

On Sept. 26, a Vietnamese was intercepted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 after he was caught using a fake Malaysian passport.

The fake passport holder, Yang Gong An, 27, was transiting from Manila to New Zealand.

He admitted his real nationality after immigration officers were alerted by airline staff that his Malaysian name was not in the manifest of his connecting flight to New Zealand.

## Metro cops urged to focus on mandate amid issues

**MANILA** -- Maj. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar, director of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), on Thursday urged police officers in the region to remain focused on fulfilling their mandate undistracted by issues which have put the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the limelight.

“The police organization is now facing challenges like the Senate investigation. But I would like to remind each and everyone of you that this allegation is being investigated happened a few years back and all of them are being given a chance to explain,” Eleazar said in his speech before more than 1,000 policemen from the Southern Police District (SPD) after a One-Time, Big-Time operation that resulted in the arrest of a number of law violators in Parañaque City on Thursday.

“The war on drugs is a complicated matter but we should not be distracted. We have a lot of work to do,” he said.

He said the allegations against Philippine National Police (PNP) chief, Gen. Oscar Albayalde should not affect the anti-illegal drug

campaign.

“But we should not give them (drug personalities) that chance, we should continue our job and show to them that we remain focused on our job of relentlessly running after them,” said Eleazar.

Eleazar said this is the reason why he is meeting with as many NCRPO personnel as possible to boost their morale and continue their law enforcement duties.

PNP spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Bernard Banac, earlier said there is no need for a loyalty check among their ranks.

Banac, however, said he is confident that the PNP will be able to hurdle this current challenge.

On Wednesday, Albayalde said he will not quit his post, noting that he still enjoys the trust and confidence of President Rodrigo Duterte.

The PNP chief, who will bow out of the service upon turning 56 on November 8, is under fire for his alleged interference with the case of 13 erring police officers who were involved in the recycling of seized illegal drugs from a raid in Mexico town in Pampanga in 2013.

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