



NEWS RELEASE

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No lifting of Iraq deployment ban, work in Afghanistan restricted

POEA Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said the total deployment ban to Iraq has not been lifted as she refute claims by some recruiters that the government is imposing a double standard policy by allowing selected security personnel to be deployed to Iraq.

Baldoz said a joint POEA-NBI team even arrested Fil-American Mark Villacruz for recruiting security personnel for Iraq and Afghanistan inside the premises of Armstrong Resources Corporation, a licensed recruitment agency.

Baldoz said the July 2004 ban on deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq has not been lifted and the reported deployment of some 3,500 workers to Iraq did not pass the documentation system of the government.

Baldoz also clarified that the government allowed the deployment of Filipinos to Afghanistan under restricted term requiring clearance from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

While POEA admits the undocumented departure of workers using tourist visa with some eventually landing to Iraq, it is confident that the ongoing coordinative efforts with the Bureau of Immigration will reduce if not altogether stop the illegal traffic of workers to Iraq.

Baldoz reiterates that because of the deployment ban to Iraq, the license of an agency found recruiting Filipino workers for Iraq can be cancelled. The equally harsh penalty of life imprisonment awaits any illegal recruiter operating as a syndicate or committed against three or more applicants, regardless of country or skill for which he will be deployed. ###