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PRESS RELEASE

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No recruitment of nurses and caregivers to Japan yet

Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz yesterday said the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement was signed already but the recruitment of nurses and caregivers to Japan is yet to start even as she warned jobseekers to be wary of illegal recruiters who may take advantage of them.

Baldoz said recruitment will begin upon finalization of the memorandum of understanding between Philippines and Japan that will define the system of recruitment of Filipino nurses and caregivers to Japan.

The administrator said she is confident the MOU will be finished very soon since almost all issues relating to the selection and deployment of our workers, and the selection and qualification of Japanese employers have been resolved already.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi signed the trade agreement in Helsinki, which included the admission of 1,000 nurses and caregivers into Japan.

Candidates for the jobs will be selected by the Philippine government through POEA and study the Japanese language for six months in Japan before they receive on-the-job training. Within the 3 years OJT given to nurses and 4 years to caregivers, they should pass the stringent Japan qualification exams to allow them to work in Japan for a longer term otherwise they will have to go home.

Baldoz explained that under the proposed MOU, the recruitment and deployment of nurses and caregivers will be implemented by the POEA through its government-to-government hiring system and without the intervention by any private person or entity, including licensed agencies.

"We tried to negotiate for the participation of the private sector, but Japan stood firm on its position considering that this is the first kind and they want to make sure that there will be no problem in its implementation", Baldoz added.

Baldoz said the terms of the proposed MOU will be very cost-friendly to the accepted workers - without placement fee, free airfare, and free six months language training in Japan.

Baldoz said the POEA will soon announce the start of the recruitment process. She also warned jobseekers to avoid being victimized by illegal recruiters by not dealing with any person or office other than the POEA in their application for jobs in Japan.

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