



### **DEMAND FOR OFWS IN ASIA REMAINS BRIGHT**

At the recently concluded Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) Command Conference in Manila, the POLOs in Asia reported that the demand for OFWs in Asia remained bright despite competition posed by other labor sending-countries and restrictive labor and nationalization policies of some host countries.

The region's continued economic growth has resulted to construction of major infrastructures and industrial projects. Consequently, it has induced a steady increase in the demand for foreign workers such as professionals (engineers, teachers and IT workers) and skilled workers. Asian countries, particularly Korea (under the Employment Permit System) and Taiwan remain to be major destinations for Filipino factory workers. There are also emerging opportunities for IT and healthcare workers in Taiwan, while Korea will require skilled workers in the construction and ship-building sectors. On the other hand, Singapore's hotel and gaming industry offers bright employment prospects for managers, supervisors and skilled workers that includes croupiers, dealers, chambermaids and waiters/waitresses. There are also demands for architects, engineers and draftsmen in Singapore's construction sector.

Filipino nurses will now have easier access to employment opportunities in the ASEAN healthcare sectors, particularly in Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore with the recent signing of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Nursing Services. Prior to the signing of the MRA, these countries which are the top destinations of Filipino nurses in Southeast Asia, did not recognized the license of Filipino nurses and required them to pass an examination before they can practice their profession. Under the MRA, licensed Filipino nurses will be recognized by the host country and allowed to practice their profession in ASEAN member countries and vice versa.

There is a rising demand for IT and related skills in Penang, Johore and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. The construction and shipbuilding and ship repair industries in Johore are also in need of skilled workers, while Genting Highlands Hotels and Resorts are in need of casino workers and entertainers. Brunei's oil and gas, hotel and restaurant and construction industries present good employment opportunities for skilled workers and professionals such as fabricators, riggers, high pressure operators, managers and engineers (civil, structural, electrical and pipe).

Source: POLO Reports (Asia)  
January 2007

arnel/dsktp/mktng