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Tourism dialogue slated October 26-27

October 24, 2009, 1:06pm

It is all systems go for the National Dialogue on Enhancing Philippine Competitiveness in Tourism set on October 26 to 27 at the Dusit Thani Hotel in Makati City.

Spearheaded by the Tourism Committee of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) in cooperation with the Department of Tourism (DoT) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Tourism Dialogue brings together various public and private stakeholders in the tourism sector including the Federation of Tourism Industries of the Philippines, Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines, Philippine Tour Operators Association among many. These various groups will gather to develop consensus on key issues arising from the law and to propose suggestions to the Department of Tourism for the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) due for completion soon.

The conference will be attended by more than 100 participants representing various tourism associations, local government units and various stakeholders in the tourism sector.

Supported by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the said event gathers local and international speakers to share their experiences as inputs to the conference recommendations.

Tourism ranks high among national government's priority sectors since it holds great potential not only in attracting large investments in infrastructure, facilities, and foreign currency inflows, but likewise in income and employment generation.

In an effort to support the further development of Philippine tourism, the President has enacted the RA 9593 "An act declaring a national policy for tourism as an engine of investment, employment, growth and national development."

This law is innovative as it not only re-defines institutional mandates and reorganizes the institutional landscape of Government's tourism development efforts, but it also places a strong emphasis on enterprise and investment promotion. However, for the new law to become an effective tool for tourism sector development, the focus must be on implementation of the law.

The law was passed on May 12, 2009 and was made effective in August. Based on the legislative timeframe, the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) will be released within 90 days and shall be promulgated by the Secretary of Tourism upon consultation with the stakeholders.

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