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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Foreign Affairs (Technical Working Group)	HBs 487, 1894, 1922, 1953, 1967, 1995, 2063, 2153, 2191, 2296, 2330, 2340, 2432, 2499, 2682, 2791, 2827, 2970, 3262, 3506, 3669 & 3940	Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Montoro, Salimbangon, Santos-Recto, Suansing (E), Tan (A.), Villar, Pineda, Aragonese, Acop, Bertiz, Salceda, Oaminal, Dalipe, Deputy Speaker Abu, Reps. Ferriol-Pascual, Andaya, Ermita-Buhain, Aglipay-Villar, Primicias-Agabas, Tambunting, and Castelo	Extending the validity period of the Philippine passport to 10 years, amending Section 10 of RA 8239, otherwise known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Deputy Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga), approved the following amendments to Section 10 of RA 8239 or the Philippine Passport Act of 1996:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That regular Philippine passports shall be valid for a period of five years for minors aged zero to 17, and 10 years for adults 18 years old and above; and • That the issuing authority may limit the passport's period of validity to less than 10 years whenever such restriction is necessary to uphold the country's national economic interest or political stability. <p>The approved amendments will be presented to the Mother Committee on November 22.</p> <p>RA 8239 provides for a five-year passport validity regardless of the age of the applicants.</p> <p>Contrary to the proposal of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo asserted that expired passports should not be returned to the DFA, but instead be kept in the possession of the owner as the same can still be used for personal or legal purposes.</p> <p>Reps. Aniceto "John" Bertiz III (Party-List, ACTS-OFW) and Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan) supported the suggestion of Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo.</p> <p>DFA Assistant Secretary Frank Cimafranca said the Department will study further its position on expired passports.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Games and Amusements	<p>Briefing by the following government agencies on their respective mandates and plans and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2nd District, Parañaque City), listened to the briefing conducted by the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom) and Games and Amusements Board (GAB) on their mandates and plans and programs.</p> <p>Created pursuant to Presidential Decree 420 under the Office of the President, Philracom Executive Director Andrew Rovie Buencamino said that Philracom is</p>

<p>Continuation... Games and Amusements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games and Amusements Board (GAB) 	<p>mandated to promote and accelerate the development and growth of the horse racing industry, not only in pursuit of the development of such sport but also as a source of revenue and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Buencamino likewise apprised the Committee on the status of horse breeding in the Philippines, as well as on-going programs and programs that are already in the pipeline.</p> <p>Buencamino reported that there are currently three horse race tracks operating in the country which are conducting night racing on weekdays and day racing on weekends, namely: Manila Jockey Club, Inc. in Carmona, Cavite; Philippine Racing Club, Inc. in Naic, Cavite; and the newly open MetroTurf in Malvar, Batangas,</p> <p>In spite of the operations of the three race tracks, Buencamino reported that Philracom's annual gross sales decreased from P8.2 billion in 2014 to P7.7 billion in 2015. Buencamino attributed the decrease in gross sales of Philracom to competition, such as the number games conducted by casinos and illegal gambling.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Tambunting on the steps that will be undertaken by Philracom to address the decrease in its annual gross sales, Buencamino said that they plan to expand off-track betting stations, particularly in major provinces in the north, as well as improve their marketing strategies through the use of media, internet and television.</p> <p>Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo (2nd District, Quezon City) said that the simultaneous betting on cockfighting shown live even while horse racing activities are going on contributed to the decrease in the gross sales of Philracom.</p> <p>Philracom Commissioner Ramon Bagatsing Jr. said that the agency responsible for issuing permit to conduct online <i>sabong</i> (cockfighting) is lodged with the Games and Amusements Board (GAB).</p> <p>The Members of the Committee agreed to conduct a <i>motu proprio</i> investigation relative to the conduct of online <i>sabong</i> in the vicinity of horse tracks.</p> <p>Created pursuant to Executive Order 392, GAB Chairman Abraham Kahlil Mitra said that GAB is mandated to regulate and supervise professional sports and to combat and prevent the existence and proliferation of illegal bookie joints and other forms of organized illegal gambling connected with all play-for-pay sports and amusement games.</p> <p>Mitra likewise discussed the functions and various activities of the GAB, including the number of licenses and permits issued, number of games supervised and monitored, and income generated by GAB from 2014 to 2016.</p> <p>Mitra requested for additional funding to strengthen the Anti-Illegal Gambling Unit (AIGU) in the GAB the function of which is to combat and eradicate illegal gambling in professional sports. (Created by virtue of AO 262, as amended by AO 222, the AIGU is composed of the organic and detailed personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), other law enforcement agencies, including the Philracom, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), and other agencies involved in gaming operations.)</p> <p>On the concerns raised by the Members of the Committee relative to online <i>sabong</i>, Mitra said that GAB issues permit for its live streaming. However, he admitted that it cannot regulate the betting system for online <i>sabong</i> because the betting is done in localities and is governed by the Local Government Code. (GAB only regulates and supervises international cockfighting derbies.)</p> <p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) that will strengthen the authority of GAB to regulate even local cockfighting.</p>
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