

Date: Sat, 10 May 2008 01:17:01 -0700 (PDT)
From: anna liza navarro <annavarro02@yahoo.com>
Subject: meeting with family of benjamin cruz on mabanto's case
To: joseph espiritu <jim_espiritu@yahoo.com>
CC: ellene <ellenesana@yahoo.com>, cma-phils <cma@tri-isys.com>

Meeting with Mr. Nestor Cruz (brother of deceased OFW Benjamin Cruz)
3 p.m., Cruz' residence in Novaliches
Anna, Jasmin

1. We were able to talk to Mr. Nestor Cruz, but failed to meet Maria Paz Cruz, spokesperson for the Cruz family, who was in Pateros that day. As they were not expecting us, Nestor asked how we got their address, and we told him that we got it from Saudi and not from DFA. He also asked why we visited them and asked personal information from Jasmin like her address, where she hailed from, and about their children.
2. Jasmin asked Nestor if they still felt angry at the Mabanto family, especially to Jameel because of what happened to their brother. Nestor said their family has already accepted the death of Benjamin.
3. We also asked if they already have a copy of the medical record, which states that their brother died from natural causes. Nestor didn't have a copy but her sister Paz might have one because she kept all documents related to their brother's case.

The family doesn't believe that Benjamin died from natural causes. They explained that when they saw Benjamin's body, his eyes were bulging and he had bruises on his chest. They said it looked like he was beaten with what could have been a lead pipe. He also had no heart problems, so it was impossible that he died from heart attack.

Nestor also mentioned some incidents before Benjamin died. Someone sprayed something on Benjamin's eyes as he was going back to their barracks. Nestor also suspects that Benjamin could have been killed by more than one person. The medical record was also written hastily in order to effect an early repatriation of their brother's body.

4. Asked about the blood money, Nestor said that it amounted to P600,000 but may climb to more than a million pesos. He explained that the DFA showed him the brackets for such cases. He couldn't explain further. Nestor also said that if they were to require a given amount for blood money, they hoped that it will not be too much of a burden to the Mabanto family.
5. Jasmin explained that she had long wanted to talk to Benjamin's family. For their part, the Cruz family was already willing to settle with the Mabanto family after accepting their brother's fate.
6. We told him about the coming hearing of Jameel. We also told him that it took almost two years before Jameel could face a hearing. Nestor showed shock upon hearing this.
7. While talking to Nestor, her sister Paz called his cellphone in which she confirmed our Tuesday meeting at the DFA. Nestor also gave us his cell number (+639178874344), but told us he still has to get Paz' permission to give us her cell number.

Thanks,
Anna

Center for Migrant Advocacy, Philippines (CMA-Phils)
72-C Matahimik St., Teachers' Village, Diliman,
1101 Quezon City, Philippines
Tel: +63 2 4330684; +63 2 9205003
Email: cma@tri-isys.com
Website: www.pinoy-abroad.net