

GMA hails new prov'l bus stops along EDSA

President Arroyo lauded yesterday the early completion of the Metro Manila Development Authority's newest traffic solution project along EDSA for some 2,500 provincial buses that now have their own loading and unloading bays.

She personally inspected one of the 15 new bus stops located near Quezon Avenue in Quezon City where a pedestrian footbridge has also been erected. Arroyo was joined by MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando and other agency officials who explained to her how designating separate stops for city and provincial buses will greatly ease traffic along EDSA.

The brief inspection signified

that all 15 new bus stops from Monumento in Caloocan to Taft in Pasay are now being made operational.

"She's very happy. She placed pressure on us to complete all these," Fernando told **The STAR** in an interview after the President left. According to Fernando, the project was actually in response to a request by governors of Northern and Southern Luzon provinces where provincial buses ply.

"She said that this is a good Christmas gift to the people," Fernando said adding that the Chief Executive was very satisfied with the MMDA's work.

Provincial buses, like city buses, are similarly given only 30 seconds to load and unload

passengers and should leave the area as soon as another bus is fast approaching the bus stops.

Under the rules, only provincial buses with a "P" mark painted below or above the windshield of their vehicles are allowed to use the new loading and unloading stations.

Fernando earlier announced that the project seeks to reduce conflicts over the shared use of limited road and bus stops between city and provincial bus units. He noted that the minor curtailment of commuter privileges such as boarding or alighting anywhere they please will minimize its contribution to traffic congestion along EDSA.

— Michael Punongbayan



ALL IS WELL: President Arroyo and MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando (left) together with local officials inspect the newly designated provincial bus stops in EDSA yesterday. FRANCY MARCELO