WORKER CRISIS

Calvo slams feds on limit; 82 H-2B workers on island

HAIDEE V EUGENIO

Gov. Eddie Calvo said the military buildup, as well as the island’s health and safety, is at stake if the federal government doesn’t resolve the foreign worker visa problem by the end of this year. Calvo just came back from Washington, D.C., where he was not able to get an immediate response to reverse the near 100 percent rejections of foreign worker visas for Guam, he said the federal government is now more aware about the national implications if the island cannot import any more foreign workers to build military projects.

“Some of the problems that we’re facing has nothing to do with what Kim Jong Un has done, but what ... the federal government in particularly, and Homeland Security has done,” the governor said at a Guam Contractors Association meeting Wednesday at Hyatt Regency Guam.

Witness: Agababa admitted to killing

JASMINE STOLE

One of the last witnesses for the prosecution to take the stand on Wednesday was Allan Alcon Agababa, who told him he had killed his mother and intended to stage a burglary.

Agababa, 30, is on trial in connection with the August 2013 death of his mother, Shelby June Bernstein. Bernstein, 55, was found dead in a pool of blood in her bed in the one-bedroom Tamuning apartment she lived in with Agababa and Agababa’s brother.

Agababa is charged with a single count of aggravated murder. His trial began last week.

Witness Randall Wayne Fulcher said he and Agababa were friends, and sometime in 2013 Agababa sent him a Facebook message, looking for a gun. Fulcher bought a .357 Magnum for $100 and sold it to Agababa for $150, Fulcher said.

Fulcher also said Agababa called him one night around 10 p.m. and said he was coming over. Fulcher said Agababa never had been to his house before, but found it without having been given directions.

When he arrived, Agababa was holding two plastic shopping bags, one with clothes and rubber gloves and another bag that had the gun, Fulcher said.

“The only thing he said is, ‘I just killed my mom,’” Fulcher said. “I didn’t believe him. He was just too nonchalant, too calm.”

There was a burning pit in the back of Fulcher’s house, where he said Agababa burned the clothes.

Agababa also had two Mac laptops in his possession, Fulcher testified.

Fulcher recalled Agababa used a ball peen hammer to smash the two laptops in the kitchen sink. Fulcher’s ex-wife, Leiailoha Borja Rodriguez, testified Wednesday that Agababa said he had been dealing drugs and gambling and that he needed money.

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Statehood advocate asks mayors for help

GINETTE BOCANEGRA
PACIFIC DAILY NEWS

Statehood advocate Edie Duenas, a former Guam lawmaker, was one of several mayors of Guam, where she talks about the benefits of Guam becoming a state.

Guam currently is a territory of the United States, and there are plans to hold a plebiscite to allow voters to choose the preferred future political relationship—dependence, free association or statehood.

Duenas said in 1991, a petition was signed by 20 Cha- morro leaders, asking the United States for a permanent civil government and citizenship.

"Quo Vadis-Where do we go from here?" she asked. "This is the time to use the momentum that this new government has brought about.

Guam's need

At the GCA meeting, Calvo briefly mentioned his recent trip to Washington, D.C. He criticized the federal government for causing problems on Guam, but said he had spoken to the congressional leaders in the mainland United States about the issue and made some progress.

Duenas reiterated that Guam has about 6,000 workers in the construction workforce, and that the government needs to support the construction sector to create jobs and bring economic growth.

S$B in five years

Meeting construction needs, especially for both military and civilian projects, is a challenge, as is attracting American workers from the mainland, Calvo said. "You all know two voting senators at least one member of the House of Representatives, which would enable Guam to have a voice in shaping laws and policies.

"Currently, our officials representing us in D.C. don't have voting rights," he said.

Duenas held out information pamphlets and shared her personal phone number, asking elected leaders to call her and help gather more support for the status option.

"Statehood for Guam-let us assume our place as Guamanian Americans in the 21st century. Let us proceed and make Guam the 51st state of the Union, where America's day begins," she said.

Amanda Blas, executive director of the government's Commission on Decolonization, which oversees the three different task force groups representing the political options, asked that the mayors reach out to the people in their communities and voice their opinions regarding Guam's future.

Mayor Jesse Aguirre asked that she coordinate with the three status groups and work together to arrange subsequent meetings at which to review the results.