



**News Release
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POEA taps biggest retail chain for worker education program

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration expands the reach of its worker education and anti-illegal recruitment programs as Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Marianito D. Roque signed yesterday a memorandum of understanding with SM Retail, Inc. and SM Prime Holdings, Inc., owner of the largest mall chain in the Philippines.

POEA Administrator Jennifer Jardin-Manalili said the SM Retail, Inc. and SM Prime Holdings will provide in its malls nationwide venues for various POEA services targeting overseas job applicants, OFWs, and their families.

Ms. Teresita Sy-Coson signed the MOA in her capacity as president of SM Retail, Inc. and Hans T. Sy as president of SM Prime Holdings, Inc. while Secretary Roque signed in his capacity as chairman of the POEA Governing Board.

As provided in the MOU, SM will set up an OFW Access Center in its malls where OFWs can verify licensed agencies and job orders, attend pre-employment orientation and anti-illegal recruitment seminars, and secure information and education materials. The center is also eyed as a facility for the eventual processing of documents of returning workers.

Secretary Roque also signed a separate MOU with Banco de Oro that embodies the government's and the bank's commitment to educate overseas Filipino workers on the proper use and remittance of their earnings.

Administrator Manalili said the partnership with the private sector is another strategy in the government's implementation of a massive and extensive information campaign on the realities of overseas employment, including illegal recruitment.

SM Retail, Inc. operates some 34 SM malls nationwide. ###