



News Release
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POEA suspends recruiters that deployed domestic worker as tourist

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration yesterday warned overseas Filipino workers anew against leaving the country using a tourist visa and without legal work documents issued by the government.

Administrator Hans Leo J. Cacdac said he has ordered the preventive suspension of another licensed recruitment agency and its foreign counterpart who were found responsible for the deployment of a household service worker (HSW) to United Arab Emirates without proper documentation as an OFW.

Cacdac said the POEA *motu proprio* filed various administrative and criminal cases against Upscale Employment Agency Co. and UAE-based Sonar Agency upon receiving a memorandum from the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Abu Dhabi requesting the investigation of a possible case of trafficking in person and illegal recruitment involving the two agencies and a runaway domestic worker.

In an affidavit forwarded by POLO-Abu Dhabi, the HSW narrated that she first applied with the recruitment agency for a domestic work in Jordan but she failed the interview. However, the agency assured her that she can still work in another country and advised her to undergo training at TESDA and to attend the Pre-Departure Employment Seminar. She was deployed after waiting for four months using a circuitous route and without a signed employment contract.

Cacdac said the worker alleged that with an agreed monthly salary of 1,200 Dirhams and pocket money provided by the agency, she left the country in February 2015 with a tourist visa. The plane ticket provided by the recruitment agency has the itinerary Manila – Kalibo - Malaysia - Sri Lanka - Abu Dhabi.

She claimed that a staff of Sonar Agency fetched her at the airport and told her that she would be receiving 1,100 Dirhams only. She worked for her employer for three weeks.

She asked to be returned to Sonar because she was being maltreated by her ward who threw hard and sharp objects on her face and sprayed chemical (defol) in her eyes.

Her sponsor took away her mobile phone when the latter learned that she was accepting calls from within the UAE. She was locked inside the house whenever the employer's family go out. She also complained of overwork, inadequate rest and insufficient food. She decided to run away and sought the help of the Philippine Embassy in Abu Dhabi.

Cacdac said Upscale Employment Agency Co. and Sonar Agency were preventively suspended from recruiting and deploying overseas Filipino workers after determining reasonable grounds that their continued operations will result to further violation and circumvention of the POEA Rules and exploitation of workers being recruited, deployed, or those already at the worksite. /END