

News Release
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Husband and wife team nabbed for illegal recruitment

DOLE Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III has directed the immediate prosecution of a couple caught in the act of illegal recruitment.

The CIDG Anti-Transnational Crime Unit, at the instance of the Anti-Illegal Recruitment Operatives of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), arrested Stephanie M. Valdez and her spouse Jhoan "Khalil" Yuen, for recruiting overseas Filipino workers without the proper license from the POEA.

Administrator Hans Leo J. Cacdac reported to DOLE Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III the arrest of Valdez and Yuen, which resulted from the complaint of an applicant who said she was promised a job as household service worker in Qatar and was charged a placement fee of Php65,000.00.

In an entrapment operation inside a supermarket in Quezon City, the joint operatives recovered from the couple the marked money the applicant supposedly paid to the recruiters as additional placement fee.

The applicant said Valdez initially asked her to pay Php 20,000 for processing her papers but she was able to pay Php 14,000 only.

Valdez allegedly directed her to proceed to an agency to sign an employment contract and for stamping of visa, and was asked to pay Php 35,000 for placement fee to Valdez' husband Khaleel Yuen.

Cacdac said the applicant decided not to push through with her application, and sought counsel from the POEA Legal Assistance Division, where she was told that she must pay a total of Php 65,000 placement fee, an amount higher than the amount previously agreed upon.

Under POEA rules and regulations, domestic workers shall only be recruited by POEA-licensed recruitment agencies, which are prohibited to charge any placement fees from domestic worker recruits or applicants.

In the case of the household worker victim of Valdez and Yuen, she was also told to declare that she only paid an amount equivalent to one month's salary as placement fee. Note that payment by a household worker of one month's placement fee is still illegal under POEA rules and regulations.

Recovered from the recruiters were two pieces of Php 500 bills used in the entrapment operations.

The recruiters were brought for Inquest Proceedings before the Department of Justice, for Illegal Recruitment punishable under R.A. No. 8042, as amended, and Swindling under the Revised Penal Code.

Secretary Bello ordered Administrator Cacdac to closely monitor the DOJ proceedings and the eventual criminal case that will be filed before a Regional Trial Court.

The respondents waived their rights under Article 125 of the Revised Penal Code to avail of Preliminary Investigation, and are detained in a detention facility. /END