

NEWS RELEASE
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Fake POEA employees arrested for illegal recruitment

Operatives of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and the Anti-Transnational Crime Unit of PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG-ATCU) arrested on Friday (January 15) four suspected illegal recruiters posing as employees of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

The government agents arrested during an entrapment operation in Quezon City Roberto Bustillo, Christopher Bustillo, Catherine Balucanag and Marites Magpoc who were reported to be recruiting Filipino workers for supposed overseas jobs.

The arrests resulted from the complaints received by the POEA's Anti-illegal Illegal Recruitment Branch from the alleged victims which were immediately reported to the PNP/CIDG-TACU for proper police action.

The victims said four persons presented themselves as employees of the POEA and offered them jobs as farm workers in New Zealand in exchange for payment of processing fees.

The suspects were verified as neither POEA employees nor they were authorized to recruit for overseas employment.

Aside from the marked money, the operatives recovered from the group fake POEA identification cards, employment contracts bearing the logo of POEA, and several passports of the victims.

Bustillo and his group are currently under the custody of the CIDG-ATCU and would be charged with estafa, syndicated illegal recruitment and usurpation of authority. The suspects would be facing possible lifetime imprisonment and millions of pesos in fines.

Meanwhile, POEA Administrator Bernard P. Olalia urged other victims of the group to get in touch with the POEA Prosecution Division through email legalassistance@poea.gov.ph. He promised them free legal assistance in the filing and prosecution of the cases.

The Administrator reminded overseas job applicants to always verify offers of employment through the POEA website poea.gov.ph or telephone hotlines 87221144 and 87221155 specially when the recruiter asks immediate payment of placement or processing fees.

He also encouraged the public to report illegal recruitment activities to the POEA Operations and Surveillance Division at email osd@poea.gov.ph or call (02) 8722-1192 or through the Facebook page of the Anti-Illegal Recruitment Branch www.facebook.com/airbranch. ###