

Philippine Gov't asked to intervene in crackdown on Filipino workers in Malaysia

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"The government should immediately intervene and protect Filipino workers who are facing serious security and safety issues in Malaysia. Our kababayan should not be made to suffer the backlash of government's inept actions, considering that this is not new for our overseas Filipino workers in Malaysia and in Kuwait just recently."

This was the statement of Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggawa (SENTRO) following the reported crackdown in Malaysia over the weekend on foreign workers including Filipino workers.

"We expect Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Allan Peter Cayetano to look into the matter and assist our Filipino workers of the service they have long waited from the government to legitimize their stay in Malaysia. Many of our kababayans have been victims of trafficking, illegal recruitment, and even false and inefficient processing of documentation of workers requesting migration. In no way should our people be subjected to harassment, arrests, detention, and other penalties due to the circumstances that brought them to this situation," explained Mata.

According to Mata, Malaysia has a history of being a hub of human trafficking and this is well documented by civil society and even shown in government data. "What the Malaysian and Philippine governments should do is to run after these syndicates and everybody responsible for it," he added.

In a statement released by the network of civil society groups working with migrant workers in Malaysia, the advocates said criminalizing victims and survivors is not the way to go. The groups said it is high time that the governments of Malaysia, Philippines, and other countries that are stakeholders in the issue, engage in a dialogue to always keep the best interest of their citizens in their hearts and minds.

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Sentro, Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa

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