

## HK agencies threaten to stop hiring Pinoy workers

Written by Administrator

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MANILA, Philippines - After the Manila hostage fiasco, Filipinos aspiring to work in Hong Kong face a new crisis.

Employment agencies in Hong Kong are now threatening to stop the recruitment of workers from the Philippines due to the mandatory insurance requirement.

According to Alfredo Palmiery, Society of Hong Kong Accredited Recruiters in the Philippines (SHARP) president, their counterparts in Hong Kong have expressed their intention to stop the processing of the contracts of Filipino household workers.

Palmiery said recruitment agencies in Hong Kong are strongly opposed to the insurance scheme since it would just be a "redundant cost" for Hong Kong employers.

"At this time Hong Kong employers are already providing insurance coverage to their housemaids that far exceeds the coverage given by the new law," he pointed out.

Palmiery noted domestic helpers deployed to Hong Kong are covered by a HK\$200,00 insurance which amounts to P1.2 million, which is definitely higher than the US\$15,000 life insurance offered by local insurers.

"Thus Hong Kong agencies refused any additional insurance expense," he said.

Palmiery said Hong Kong hires more than 30,000 Filipino workers annually.

Local recruiters also reported that agencies in the Middle East are also opposed to the insurance scheme since they are already giving \$25,000 insurance coverage.

The Philippine government is set to enforce a new hiring regulation that would require recruitment agencies to provide insurance for departing workers.

But recruitment leaders said they could not afford the fixed tariff rate of \$144 or \$72 per year for the compulsory insurance policies offered by various consortiums.