

Rody vows to issue EO on 'endo'

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President Duterte yesterday assured labor groups that his office is keen on coming out with an executive order that will address contractualization in the private sector.

Labor groups have been demanding the total ban of contractualization, which undermines workers' rights to security of tenure, freedom of association and to bargain collectively.

Duterte said there is "unrest on the labor front" because they want the executive order released soon, but he needs more time to study the drafts of the order submitted to him.

"Another copy (of the draft executive order) was submitted to me," Duterte said before he delivered his speech during the awarding ceremony for the 44 slain commandos of the Philippine National Police Special Action Force.

"They want it fast-tracked," he added. "We are trying our best to help the Filipino people."

Earlier, Malacañang announced that the President would sign an executive order on contractualization on or before Labor Day on May 1.

Labor group SENTRO said Duterte's failure to fulfill his campaign promise to sign an executive order against contractualization is now starting to take its toll on the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

"After almost a year and after revising its draft five times to accommodate President Duterte's request for some flexibility, the labor groups' version of the EO has yet to be signed," SENTRO vice chair Daniel Edralin said.

Edralin said the President even missed his self-imposed deadline last March 15 and again postponed his April 16 meeting with labor groups.

Labor groups expressed belief that some labor officials are hampering their efforts to urge the President to issue an executive order against contractualization.

Labor Undersecretary Dominador Say resigned on Tuesday.

Say said he decided to resign to spare Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III from accusations that he is favoring management on the issue of contractualization.

SENTRO said they expect Duterte to fire more labor officials before he finally signs the much-awaited EO regulating employment in the country.

"We hope that his (Say) resignation would now pave the way for the immediate issuance of an EO by President Duterte that will make direct hiring by the principal employer as the norm in employment relations," Edralin said.

Labor groups have also dismissed as "deceptive argument" the claim of business groups that banning short-term employment will scare away investors.

"Only bad investors are scared of a regular workforce. Luring investors to invest because they can avail of contractual workers with no security of tenure, low wages and benefits is a policy of profit first before anything else," Partido ng Manggagawa chair Renato Magtubo said in a statement.