

Manila has itself to blame for citizens' woes, says Chong

KOTA KINABALU, Wed. — The Philippine Government should blame itself for the problems faced by its citizens who have been asked to leave Sabah for entering the State illegally.

Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat said it was unfair for Manila to insinuate that the Malaysian Government had done nothing to help in regulating the repatriation of the illegal Filipino workers.

He also said the Philippine Gov-

ernment should send its officers here to see for themselves.

"If the Philippine Government is concerned about the interest of its citizens in Sabah, they should come here and assist them," he told a post-Cabinet Press conference at his office at Wisma Innoprise here.

Chong was reacting to reports from Manila that Philippine President Gloria Arroyo was hoping "there would be humane treatment of Fili-

pinos being deported from Sabah".

The report also said that Arroyo had asked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for help in regulating the massive repatriation of the illegal Filipino workers in the State.

Chong said if the Philippine Government was concerned about the interest of its citizens in Sabah, it should have set up its consulate office here.

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