

Press release

APL denounces brutal dispersal of rally in Cebu

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The Alliance of Progressive Labor condemns the violent dispersal of protestors belonging to the Laban ng Masa coalition in Cebu during the ASEAN summit being hosted there.

“Members of the different protesting organizations numbering about 500 were 50 meters away from the international convention center, a distance that was clearly honored by our ranks, but the police violated. We were yet to finish the program when the police started moving in. They were not positioning themselves to secure the area, they were in dispersal mode,” said APL-Cebu Chairperson Jose Tomongha.

“The policemen, numbering 200 dispersed the rally and as a result, scores of protestors were injured, and two arrests were made,” Tomongha added.

Meanwhile APL Secretary-General Josua Mata said that “This is yet another intolerable example of this government’s deep-seated hatred of opposition and dissent. It is paranoid and oblivious to the interests of its own citizens all for the sake of pleasing its international guests.”

“This is not only an affront to the rights of citizens to seek redress and express themselves, but a critical example of the lengths that this government will go to in order to project an image of stability and order,” Mata added.

“We demand an investigation into this incident and that the police officials involved be immediately sacked,” Tomongha said.

“This dispersal could not have occurred without the go signal of higher ups and we demand that those responsible be charged and made to pay for their violations of the rights of workers and ordinary people to peacefully assemble and express their sentiments against the hypocrisy of the host government and the inaction of the ASEAN in matters concerning the poorest of its citizens,” Tomongha said.