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Labuan-labour

PM'S EFFORT TO SOLVE LABOUR SHORTAGE IN LABUAN GETS PRAISE

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LABUAN, July 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that contract workers be imported from the Philippines to resolve Labuan's manpower shortage has been welcomed by the commercial sector here.

Labuan Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCCI) leader Tan Sri Wong Chik Lim said he was pleased that the government took a serious view of the shortage because the situation could lead to rise in labour cost, loss in contract revenue and erosion of investors' confidence.

He said the problem could be further compounded by the anticipated development boom in Sabah because the majority of the foreign workers on the duty-free island were from the state.

Chairman of the Labuan branch of the Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry Malaysia, Haji Yusof Mohamed, said the proposal would also eliminate labour pinching by contractors.

He said that at present there were no formal contracts with the skilled and unskilled workers as many of them were daily paid and they could easily switch over to other contractors in the pursuit of higher pay. -- more

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Labuan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Roger Chua said the southern Philippines would be the ideal choice for human resources as Labuan had long established trade ties with the region.

Chua said the suggestion by Labuan Development Authority (LDA) chairman Tun Daim Zainuddin that workers from southern Philippines be issued with border passes was good because it would keep immigration formalities to a minimum while ensuring speedy recruitment and deployment of workers.

He also said that with the regular weekly flights between here and Zamboanga (southern Philippines), labour recruitment would be much easier.

Labuan Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry leader Mohinder Singh suggested that in view of the island's international status, immigration entry regulations should be more relaxed.

He urged the government to empower the Labuan immigration office to issue work passes instead of referring each case to Kuala Lumpur. --

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