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Megat-Marry

FOREIGN WORKERS WHO MARRY LOCALS WILL LOSE WORK PERMITS

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 25 (Bernama) -- Foreign workers in the country who marry Malaysian women will have their work permits revoked and ordered to leave, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob said today.

Malaysian women of all races, including the Orang Asli, who want to marry foreign workers must be prepared to follow their husbands back to their country of origin, he told reporters after opening the Federal Territory Immigration Office at Kompleks Wilayah here.

Megat Junid said this category of foreigners have been allowed into the country to work and nothing more than that.

Thus, anything they do which contravened the purpose of their stay will be given attention and firm action taken, including revocation of their work permits and deportation, he said.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was personally saddened that many Malaysian women had married these foreign workers who were recruited to hasten development projects and not to marry locals.

"If they still wish to marry, then both sides must be prepared to face the consequences," he said.

He said the Home Ministry has requested all state Islamic religious departments not to solemnise marriages between foreign workers and local Muslim women.

Megat Junid also advised parents to consider thoroughly the consequences should their daughters wished to marry foreign workers "unless their daughters have already decided to follow their respective husbands back to their countries of origin".

He said the Home Ministry had long been aware of marriages between foreign workers and local women and some of the women understood the consequences of their action as the laws of the country on the matter are clear.

However, foreign workers used all sorts of tricks and means to marry local women solely with the intention of obtaining permanent residence (PR) status quickly.

Megat Junid said he would not support applications for PR status from the foreign husbands in "marriages of convenience".

According to him, one reason for the growing number of babies being abandoned was the illicit sexual relationships between local women and the foreign workers.

Megat Junid also said the government had imposed a freeze on the entry of foreign workers since July 10 and all foreign workers who entered the country after that date would be detained.

Malaysia has informed foreign governments, especially Indonesia and Bangladesh, of the freeze and urged them to take action to prevent the illegal entry of their nationals through Thailand.

"They should not blame us if their nationals die during their journey," he said.

He said Indonesian Manpower Minister Latief had assured Malaysia the Indonesian government was willing to bring back deported Indonesians by ship directly to Surabaya in East Java instead of to Dumai in Riau to prevent them from returning to Malaysia.

Megat Junid said under the legalisation scheme for foreign workers, all legal or illegal foreign workers who entered the country before July 10 would be identified and screened to ensure they were free of communicable

diseases such as tuberculosis, were not illiterate and not aged 55 years and above.

"Without this legalisation scheme, it would be difficult for us to know the background of these workers," he said.

He said the Cabinet has approved a consortium to handle the health screening of the foreign workers to be conducted through about 5,000 clinics.

Megat Junid said less than 10 per cent of employers with foreign workers have so far registered them, and he warned those employers who did not do so that they would be prosecuted for harbouring illegal foreign workers.

"We are going to act tough from now on against errant employers as they had been given the opportunity to register their workers.

"Joint operations by the immigration, police and the Foreign Workers Task Force officers will be launched immediately," he said.

He said the government took a serious view of the clashes which occurred between Bangladeshi workers and local residents in Johor recently.

But he said it was unfair to blame only the Bangladeshis although they brought with them their alien "culture".

He said Bangladeshis were frequently the victims of extortion by local gangsters and also got into trouble with local residents because they were separated from their wives and could not control their sex drive. --

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