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Lim-Foreigners

EMPLOYERS LESS DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN WORKERS TO BE REWARDED

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Employers who are less dependent on foreign workers will be rewarded in line with the Cabinet's decision to reduce foreign labour in the country, Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek said today.

"We will see how to reward deserving employers in recognition of their role not to depend on foreign workers," he told newsmen after chairing the second meeting of the National Labour Advisory Council here today.

Lim said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself had given the directive to reward such employers in view of the increasing social problems posed by the influx of foreign workers into the country.

The minister said the government was concerned over the problems caused by foreign workers and was doing its best to overcome them.

He said that apart from the enforcement carried out by the various relevant agencies, the government also needed the cooperation of employers by being less dependent on foreign workers.

Lim said the government's new policy clearly underlined that new employment of foreign workers and the extension of foreign workers' permits would not be allowed.

This meant foreign workers should be sent back home to their respective countries upon completing their initial contracts.

The government also decided that activities of unscrupulous employers and agents, both locally and abroad, should be stopped as they smeared the good name of the country, said Lim.

He said he would be going to Pulau Pinang to inspect a company that had reportedly retrenched local workers and replaced them with foreigners.

"And next week I will go to Johor, also to inspect a company there which had committed a similar offence. The government cannot tolerate such action by unscrupulous employers at the expense of our workers," Lim said.

He said the council also agreed unanimously that the Employment Act be extended to Sabah and Sarawak as there was a need to have one single piece of legislation for the whole country.

"We cannot go on forever having two sets of labour laws in the country. It has been going on for years, and already eight years now since I became the minister," he said.

"We'll consult both state governments and I think it is time to get their views and comments as the relevant paper had been circulated to them before the ministry submits the proposal to the government for approval before the end of the year," Lim said.

The minister said the first tripartite Family Day would be organised sometime before the end of the year to be participated by government employers and workers and their families in conjunction with Labour Day celebration.

He said the Family Day, which would be an annual affair, would be hosted by the Malaysian Employers Federation this year, while the workers' side would host it next year. -- BERNAMA

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