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Malaysia urged to employ more Bangladeshi workers

PUTRAJAYA, Mon. - Malaysia has been asked to employ more Bangladeshi workers and to look into setting up labour intensive industries in Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the request was made during a meeting between Malaysian and Bangladeshi delegations led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his visiting counterpart Sheikh Hasina respectively.

"Dr Mahathir said even if more workers were taken in it would be on a rotation basis where those who had served their term would return and be replaced by a new set of people," Syed Hamid said.

He said this after the meeting at the Prime Minister's Department here.

Hasina is on a four-day official visit here. This is her first visit to the country. She is accompanied by a 73-member delegation that includes senior officials, businessmen and members of the media.

Syed Hamid said there were 119,000 Bangladeshi workers in the country.

He said the Bangladeshi side requested for this number to be increased, even doubled.

He added that Dr Mahathir, however, said workers would be taken as needed.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia was currently employing Bangladeshi workers as semi-skilled labour and that Dr Mahathir stressed that they should be employed in an orderly manner so they were not exploited by unscrupulous persons.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia was also looking into locating labour intensive industries in Bangladesh as it moved into high technology industries.

He added that Bangladesh wanted more Malaysian investment and was also looking into the possibility of evaluating and upgrading its Chittagong port.

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