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17 more Indonesians held

R. Murali

NILAI, Sat. - Police today arrested 17 more Indonesian workers from the Hualon Corporation, bringing the number of arrests to 28 of the company's employees who were involved in Thursday's rioting, including two for dadah abuse.

State Police Chief Senior Assistant Commissioner 1 Datuk Mohd Yunus Othman said police were looking for two more workers whom they believed were still in the vicinity of the company hostel.

"We know their identity through video clips and photos. They have to surrender as they have committed a crime. If they fail to do so, we will act," he said at a Press conference at the Nilai police station today.

He said Indonesian embassy officials were aware of the problem at the factory and the warning by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the Government might consider hiring foreign workers from other countries.

The officials were at the factory today to mediate the return to work of 200 staff, who had refused to turn up for work for fear that the authorities might detain them in connection with the riot.

Hualon Corporation manager Johnson Hsu today said he called the Indonesian embassy this morning to negotiate for the workers to come to work.

Hsu said three representatives from the embassy, led by counsellor Budhi Rahardjo arrived at the hostel at 1pm and held discussions with the workers.

The discussion ended about 4.30pm and the representatives then left for Nilai police station to discuss the issue with the police.

Budhi said the embassy was working closely with the police on the matter.

He said he would be visiting all companies hiring Indonesian workers and counsel them to stop rioting.

Although the 200 workers did not turn up for work today, it is understood that the factory's production was not affected.

news@nstp.com.my

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