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Consul-Indons

NO NEED TO STOP INDONESIANS FROM WORKING IN M'SIA, SAYS CONSUL-GENERAL

PENANG, Jan 24 (Bernama) -- There is no need to ban Indonesian workers from working in Malaysia as a result of troubles created by them recently, Indonesian Consul-General Herman Hidayat said today.

He said those were isolated cases and that the majority of Indonesians were law-abiding workers.

Herman, who spoke at a news conference attended by visiting barter trading businessmen from Aceh, said most Indonesian workers in Malaysia had served this country well in its plantation, construction and manufacturing industries while many were good housemaids.

The Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur, he said, had informed him that Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri would communicate and meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in due course to solve any misunderstandings about Indonesian workers and their role as useful contributors for the Malaysian economy.

As for those involved in the recent troubles, Herman said they would be charged under Malaysian laws accordingly.

This month alone saw two incidents of rioting by Indonesian workers in Malaysia namely the one staged by 500 of them at a textile factory in Nilai on Jan 17 and the second, five days later involving rival Indonesian groups from Aceh in Dengkil.

In the Jan 17 incident, the workers destroyed police vehicles and other property in protest over the detention of 16 of their colleagues who had tested positive for drug.

Following the incidents, Malaysia decided to place Indonesia as the last option when recruiting foreign workers.

Herman said there were about 30,000 workers, mostly women, employed in factories in Kedah and Penang, and last year about 2,000 had returned to Indonesia after completing their contract of service.

-- BERNAMA

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