

'Crackdown on illegal workers will only worsen woes'

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The crackdown on illegal workers is futile if the government does not also speed up the approval process of foreign workers for employers who need them most, MCA claimed.

The government's recent target of 'zero illegal immigrants' through its 6P programme and police campaign would only exacerbate the country's economic problems, MCA's Young Professionals Bureau chairperson Chua Tee Yong warned.

He cited local media reports that the loss of construction workers, for example, may push property prices up by up to 10 percent.

"The problem arises when the process of employing a foreign worker is tedious and time-consuming.

"Based on feedback from frustrated employers, it is because the process involves approval from multiple ministries and not just the Human Resources Ministry," Chua wrote in a press statement.

"I believe that the government should expedite the approval... to break the cycle of employing illegal workers."

NONEChua (left), who is also Labis MP, criticised the fact that more than 2,400 illegal immigrants were rounded up recently within 24 hours of the police operation.

Instead, he applauded the Human Resources Ministry's attempt to seek discussions with frustrated employers on better workforce estimation and manpower planning.

"Only with better communication and proper planning will the country be able to achieve its goal of zero illegal immigrants," Chua said.

The 6P legalisation programme ran from July 2011 to April 2012 for registration and legalisation of foreign workers, through 336 companies appointed by the Home Ministry but appears ineffective.

NGO Tenaganita, which champions foreign workers' rights in Malaysia, called the 6P programme an "absolute fiasco" and denounced the follow-up government crackdown on so-called unregistered workers in Malaysia.

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