

Check with your members, Zahid tells FMM on migrant worker issue

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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi wants the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) to check with its members with regard to the number of workers needed for its industries.

He was responding to FMM's claim that manufacturers did not request the large number of Bangladeshi workers which the government planned to bring in.

"Yes, they (FMM) have never applied for this but their members were the ones who applied to the Human Resource Ministry, the foreign worker division under the Immigration Department, and the unskilled foreign worker division under the Home Ministry.

"I hope they can check with their members whether they had made the applications through these three agencies," he told a press conference in Shah Alam today.

He also defended the government policy to bring in the workers, saying it was formulated in response to demand from the various sectors.

The FMM yesterday said that manufacturers do not want the entry of such a large number of Bangladeshi workers.

"Manufacturers have not specifically requested for Bangladeshi workers," it said in a statement yesterday.

The federation also had wanted an assurance that the process of recruiting workers would be transparent and efficient, without the involvement or appointment of any agents or outsourcing company in Malaysia to bring them in.

Zahid last year announced that 1.5 million Bangladeshi workers would be brought to Malaysia in stages in the next three years to meet the needs of employers from numerous sectors.

The workers will enter Malaysia under the G2G (government-to-government) Plus scheme which allows them employment in construction, service, manufacturing and agriculture sectors, apart from the existing plantation sector opened to them.

The plan to bring in the workers, however, has been met with criticism by various quarters who have questioned the need to bring in such large numbers.

Critics have pointed out how the government must first resolve the issue of undocumented workers in the country beforehand.

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