

## **Better pay, less stress: Zuraida tells youth to work in plantations**

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PARLIAMENT | Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin has encouraged local youth to switch to the plantation sector as it has better income and lower stress compared to working in the city.

Zuraida said this in reply to an additional question from Sim Tze Tzin (Pakatan Harapan-Bayan Baru) in the Dewan Rakyat today regarding the government's policy on the recruitment of foreign workers in the plantation sector.

She said the ministry is attempting to change the mentality of local youth about working in the plantation sector in non-urban areas.

"We also want to change the attitude and mindset of youth to shift to do plantation work because it is a greener environment with green technology compared to the city, which is crowded, polluted and mentally stressful.

"Plantation sector has mechanisation, the salary is good and the accommodation

is also sufficient and complete,” Zuraida told the Dewan Rakyat today.

Sim had earlier questioned Zuraida’s answer in which she said the ministry was encouraging local industry players to use foreign workers from India and Pakistan.

He said it would be unsustainable for the industry to rely too much on foreign workers as there are about six million hectares of land for palm oil in Peninsular Malaysia alone.

The government had also expressed its intent to reduce dependency on foreign workers, yet now Zuraida is encouraging using migrant labour from India and Pakistan, he said.

“So, what is the actual policy? You want to reduce the reliance on foreign workers or do you still want to continue with foreign workers?” Sim asked.

Zuraida responded that recruiting foreign workers from India and Pakistan is merely a short-term measure, as the country is currently experiencing policy-related issues regarding the recruitment of workers from Bangladesh and Indonesia.

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