

Foreign labour request

The Star - 13/5/2006

Pakistan offers more workers to Malaysia

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BALI: Pakistan has asked Malaysia to take in more workers from the country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He said Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Ali made the request when they met for bilateral discussions on the sidelines of the Developing Eight (D-8) Summit here yesterday.

"He said they had more workers to offer but we did not discuss the number.

"I agreed to consider the request.

"The relevant ministers and officials will hold a meeting in Pakistan to discuss the matter further," he told Malaysian journalists after meeting Shaukat and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for bilateral talks.

Asked if it was in addition to the 100,000 Pakistani workers deal that the two countries had agreed upon about two years ago, Abdullah said that the figure was not achieved.

"This is a fresh request and no figures were mentioned," he said, adding that they also did not touch on recruitment problems, if any, for not having met the earlier target.

Currently, there are an estimated 20,000 Pakistani workers in the country in all sectors.

On his meeting with Susilo, Abdullah said they discussed the two nations' accord on the employment of maids which was expected to be signed here on Monday.

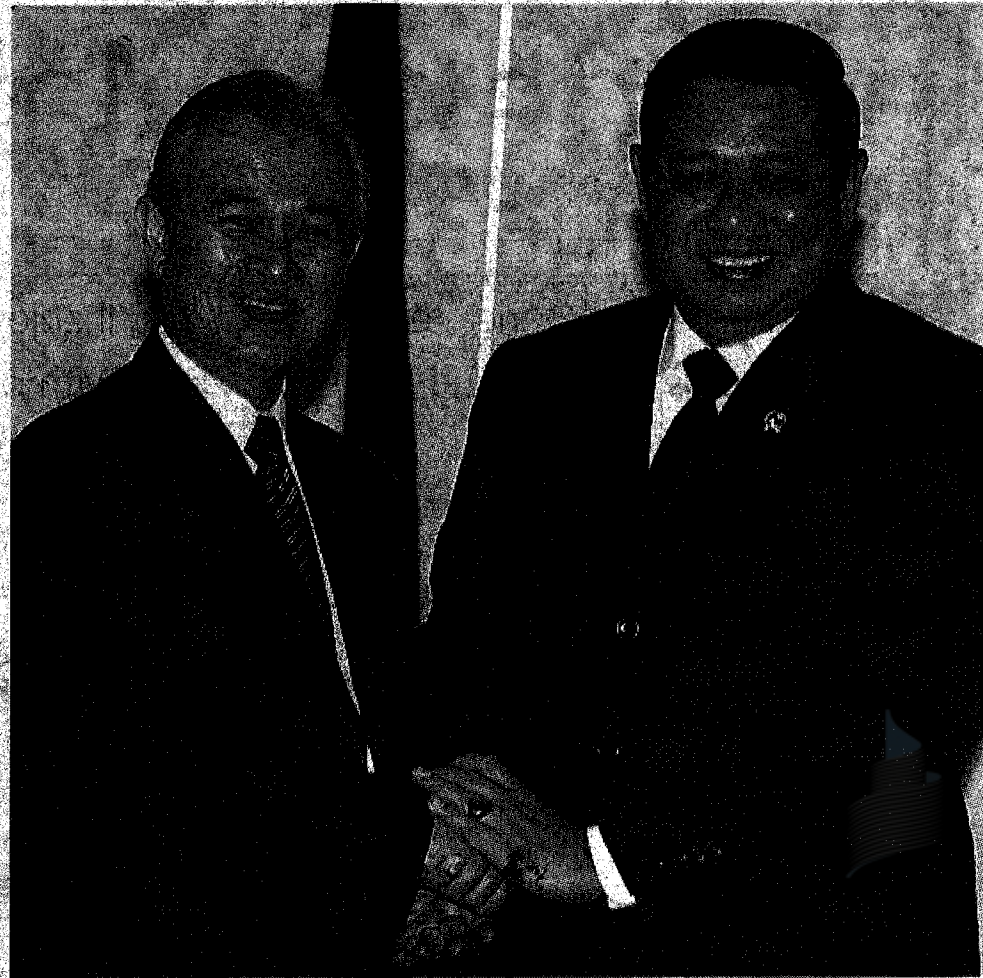
"We did not discuss details as the respective ministers will fine-tune a few outstanding issues before signing the agreement.

"Home Minister Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad is already in Bali to meet Indonesian officials on the matter," he said.

He said they discussed the many problems faced by D-8.

"We acknowledged that D-8 was facing many problems that need to be ironed out at the summit today," he said.

He made it clear that Malaysia was not interested in hosting the D-8 secretariat but did not give any reason.



ENHANCING TIES: Abdullah meeting Susilo on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit in Bali yesterday. — APpic