

Papa urges PM to intervene in maid employment

The Sun Daily

September 5, 2011

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PETALING JAYA (Sept 5, 2011): The Malaysian Association of Foreign Maid Agencies (Papa) has urged the government to intervene in the execution of terms set out under the revised MoU for Indonesia maid employment.

Its acting president Jeffrey Foo said it has been more than three months since the protocol on the amendments to the 2006 memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed, but until now, no Indonesian maids are coming in.

Instead, he said in a statement today, maids were now being brought in via Journey Performed Visas, a process which resulted in the maids being "exploited by unscrupulous agents and uncaring employers."

"The promised low fee structure also never materialised. Employers now have to pay charges of between RM11,000 to RM12,000," he said.

Since the MoU had been signed, the onus was on both governments to ensure that its terms were enforceable, he said, adding should there be any disagreements, it should be solved by both countries immediately.

Foo said Papa learnt that one of the main hindrance in enforcing the new terms was the pricing factor which the industry in Indonesia claimed is "too low" to cover the costs incurred by their employment agents.

"The Malaysian government should find out the actual demands from Indonesia and mutually commence a review on the MoU protocols, if necessary, rather than leaving the unresolved issue pending," he added.

He said the delay has caused both the employers and maid agencies to suffer losses.

"Majority of the agencies in Malaysia are in severe financial difficulty and employers also have to pay a higher price for a domestic helper," said Foo.

Indonesian Embassy minister counsellor for information, social and cultural affairs Suryana Sastradiredja had reportedly criticised the government's decision to allow hiring of maids without going through agencies.

He said it opened up loopholes for human trafficking.

Indonesian Law No 39/2004 on placement and protection of its workforce overseas forbids the act of hiring maids without going through recruitment agencies authorised by its government.

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