

MTUC Calls For Review Of Foreign Workers Relaxation Policy
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PETALING JAYA, Jan 2 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) today called on the government to review its recent decision to allow foreigners to work in sectors where locals were already employed.

This policy decision would have a "far reaching and serious impact" on the long term employment of locals because they would be displaced by foreigners who are willing to work for lesser pay, MTUC Vice President A. Balasubramaniam, told Bernama here.

On Dec 27, the government announced it would allow the 1.3 million illegal foreigners registered under its 6P programme to be employed as croupiers, newspaper vendors, grass cutters and house and vehicle cleaners.

They could also be employed by workshops and work in mining, quarries, mangrove logging, food beverages businesses and fast food outlets.

The sub sectors relaxed for them are scrap metal, cargo handling, welfare homes, hotel, golf caddy, laundry, barber, goldsmith, wholesale and retail and textile businesses.

These foreign workers would be allowed to work for 2 years.

Balasubramaniam said with such a huge relaxation, locals would be at a disadvantage because many unscrupulous employers would "get rid of their local employees" and replace them with foreigners.

Employers prefer foreigners because they need not pay high salaries and make them work long hours and provide them with bare minimum medical and accommodation facilities.

Some of these workers were also not covered by SOCSO nor enjoy EPF benefits.

Balasubramaniam said with the new policy it would be difficult for Malaysia to achieve its objective of a developed nation status as wages would be artificially suppressed.

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