

Immigration Act To Be Amended To Strengthen Singapore's Border Security
Bernama
July 09, 2012

SINGAPORE, July 9 (Bernama) -- Singapore will amend its Immigration Act (IA) to strengthen the republic's border security; facilitate legal entry of 'bona fide' foreigners into the country while keeping out undesirable persons, goods and conveyances.

In a statement, the home ministry said the Immigration (Amendment) Bill was introduced for First Reading at the Parliamentary Sitting today.

IA regulates immigration facilities, as well as the entry, stay and exit of all foreigners.

The ministry said the IA would be amended to enhance the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority's (ICA's) capabilities to stay ahead of the changing modus operandi of immigration offenders.

The last major amendment to the IA was in 2004.

Among others, the proposed amendment will criminalise marriages of convenience (MOC) by any person in order to obtain an immigration facility (e.g. entry visa, permanent residency, long-term pass, etc).

Under the amendment, ICA will be empowered to cancel the Re-entry Permit (REP) issued to a Singapore Permanent Resident (PR) if he contravenes any law or is involved in any activity which threatens a breach of peace or is prejudicial to public order.

He will lose his PR status if he travels out of Singapore or remains outside Singapore without a valid REP. This proposed amendment will also enable ICA to impose, vary, or set additional conditions for the validity of the REP.

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