

Comprehensive study needed before issuing Temporary Work Permits - PBRS

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KOTA KINABALU, Nov 1 -- A comprehensive study needs to be done on the Federal Government's proposal to implement the issuance of Temporary Work Permits to illegal immigrants to address the shortage of workers in the plantation and industrial sectors.

Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) vice-president Arthur Joseph Kurup said priority should be given to locals to work in these sectors, as currently many young Malaysians have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Many of them (Malaysians) have to return to their hometowns to tend to crops, work as food delivery riders, become petty traders to eke out a living and survive,” he said in a statement issued by the party today.

On Friday, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was reported to have said that the government was considering issuing temporary work permits to illegal immigrants in the country to overcome the shortage of workers in the oil palm and rubber industries.

Arthur said according to Malaysian labour statistics issued by the Malaysian Statistics Department in August, the unemployment rate in Malaysia was 4.7 per cent, or 741,600 individuals, which is rather high, an indication that locals were looking for job opportunities.

“The government should look at these figures and give priority to the local people. Let us not assume that they do not want to work if we do not offer this opportunity to them,” he said.

Job opportunities in the plantation and industrial sectors need to be upgraded so that the sectors can attract youth, thus reducing the dependence on foreign workers, he said.

“If these jobs are filled by locals then we can reduce the flow of money overseas and the money can stay within the country to stimulate the economy.

“The offer to foreign workers should be the last option and only if locals do not take up the job opportunities in those sectors,” he added.

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