

‘GOVT SHOULD NOT BE BLAMED FOR ACCEDING TO INDUSTRY’S FOREIGN LABOUR REQUESTS’

20 February 2016

- The Rakyat Post

The government should not be faulted for planning to bring in more foreign workers into Malaysia as it was only acceding to the industry’s requests, said an academician.

University Malaysia Sarawak, Social Science Faculty senior lecturer, Associate Professor Dr Jeniri Amir said the industry, on the other hand, should not be thinking only about profits by employing cheap foreign labour over local workers.

“Employing foreign workers is not the best solution to resolve their manpower requirements in the long run.

“If we keep taking in foreign workers, the country will eventually be flooded with them, leaving the issue of unemployment among the locals unresolved,” he said.

The government had earlier planned to bring in a large group of foreign workers from Bangladesh to meet demands in the relevant sectors, but the measure was heavily criticised by various parties.

In response to the protests, the government through Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday announced that the recruitment of all foreign workers including Bangladeshis to Malaysia would be suspended.

Commenting on the government’s decision, Selangor Youth Council president Datuk Irmohizam Ibrahim described the move as proactive.

“With this announcement, our youths should grab the opportunity to take up available jobs in the manufacturing, construction, service, plantation and agricultural sectors.

“They should not be too selective in finding employment,” he said, adding that employers too should give priority to local job seekers.

He suggested that employers in the relevant sectors monopolised by foreign workers, should consider revising the salary scales for employees and add certain incentives to attract local workers.

Meanwhile, UiTM Administrative Science and Policy Studies Faculty lecturer Professor Dr Zaliha Hussin said employers of foreign workers must keep tabs on them to prevent their involvement in negative activities.

“It is also imperative for these employers to ensure the wellbeing of their workers, such as making sure that they have proper accommodation with facilities and basic necessities.

“This could prevent the workers from resorting to illegal squatting and also enable easy monitoring,” she said when contacted by *Bernama*.

She also said the employers must play a role in identifying the number of workers they really needed so that they would not take in more than necessary.