

Proposal to confine foreign workers draws flak

KUALA LUMPUR: Restriction and constant monitoring of foreign workers is high-handed and would not reflect well on Malaysia.

Confining foreign workers in order to curb crime is a wrong approach, said Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Shamsuddin Bardan.

He was commenting on a *New Straits Times* report yesterday about a proposal by the Inspector-General of Police to house foreign workers in the *kongsi* at their work sites and monitor them even in their free time.

IGP Tan Sri Musa Hassan had suggested that foreign workers be required to register with the contractor when they go out during their days off or after working hours.

"This way, I believe the foreigners will be afraid to commit crimes as they know the police can locate them," Musa had said at a seminar at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka on Thursday.

Shamsuddin said the proposal was unfair to foreign workers as they should be treated with dignity.

"Surely we wouldn't want our people working overseas to be treated the same way."

He said the correct way to curb crime is through education. Foreign workers should be informed clearly of Malaysian laws and be told about the consequences of committing crimes.

It is the employers' duty to warn them of the consequences of crime, he added.

Malaysia has already been seen in bad light because of its policy of deporting illegal immigrants.

Malaysian Trades Union Congress president Syed Shahir Syed Mohamud said monitoring foreign workers around the clock "clearly violates their basic human right to move freely".