

# 'Thank you', bosses tell Putrajaya over looking into manpower shortage seriously

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Image for illustrative purposes only

SHAH ALAM - Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman has expressed gratitude to both the Home Affairs Minister Saifuddin Nasution and Human Resources Minister V Sivakumar for improving the process of getting foreign labour.

Syed Hussain said Malaysia was losing huge revenue due to shortage of workers.

Hussein said the additional foreign workers to be brought in under the Foreign Labour Relation Programme will contribute to 1 per cent additional gross domestic product (GDP) to the country.

“MEF assures that the foreign labours brought in to the country do not compete with local job seekers and employers are clear on the jobs to be provided to foreign workers.

"Employers prefer local workers in these sectors as the cost is so much cheaper than employing foreign workers," he said in a statement today.

He was referring to Sivakumar on Jan 15 that workers would be brought in from 15 source countries in Asia to be placed in sectors of no interest to local workers, including plantation, agriculture and construction.

According to the Batu Gajah MP, it is difficult to get local workers to work in these sectors and Malaysia's dependence on foreign workers in those sectors was high and if sufficient supply of workers cannot be provided, it will disrupt the optimal operation of the sectors and result in huge losses.

Sivakumar added workers' shortage must be solved immediately as it could affect the economy after over 700,000 foreign workers returned to their home countries during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As for the longer-term basis, Hussein highlighted MEF's hope that automation, technology, digitalisation of work processes and a change in the mindset of locals will reduce the dependency of foreign labour.