

MEF: Allow illegal workers to register themselves

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PETALING JAYA: Undocumented foreign workers should be allowed to register themselves with the Immigration Department instead of their employers doing so, said Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan.

He said this would allow the authorities to register undocumented foreign workers and transfer those registered to sectors facing manpower shortages.

“We need to find a long-term solution to the shortage of workers. We urge the Government to make the registration of foreign workers at no cost so that it will be a win-win situation for all,” he said when contacted yesterday.

It was reported that almost a year after the suspension of new foreign worker recruitment, employers in affected sectors are sending out an SOS that they are at a critical stage.

They are claiming that the shortage of workers, increase in operational costs and reduced profits have led some to close down their businesses.

Employers also will now have to pay the levy of their foreign workers under the newly introduced Employer Mandatory Commitment (EMC).

Shamsuddin said the freeze on foreign workers in the service sector not only will hurt eateries and farmers, but will eventu-

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ally affect the high-end market, such as hotels.

“Locals are hard to come by and without foreign workers, operations will be disrupted.

“We cannot expect guests at high-end hotels to do self-service.

“That can have a bad impact on the image of the country and to customers,” he said.

Meanwhile, chief security officer of a building management company, Amman Deep Jai Ram Kishen said nearly 40 of their foreign workers would be leaving for employment elsewhere when their contracts end in June.

Countries in the Middle East are offering higher pay and better facilities for their staff.

“So we could see a shortage of workers if we cannot convince them to stay as currently, they are bent on leaving.

“Unless we increase their pay, we will see them leave,” he said.