

A smoother hiring process needed

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NATION

Tuesday, 03 Jan 2023

PETALING JAYA: Ahead of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's first official visit to Indonesia, Malaysian employers have called for a smoother recruitment process of acquiring workers from the neighbouring country.

Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman urged the government to maximise diplomatic relations between both countries to increase trade opportunities and speed up the employment process for foreign workers.

"Indonesia is a large trading nation. Many trade opportunities can be discussed that will benefit employers via exports and imports.

"Malaysia depends on foreign labour in many sectors. We hope this (the visit) will be able to speed up the process and allow a larger number of workers from Indonesia to Malaysia," he said when contacted.

As Indonesia is key to Malaysia's domestic help sector, he said MEF also hoped that there would be a smooth supply of such workers to Malaysia.

Syed Hussain said Malaysia too could play a bigger part in Indonesia's economic growth by means of business collaboration.

"We believe our Prime Minister will create a successful pathway for Malaysians and Indonesians to benefit and progress together," he added.

National Association of Human Resources Malaysia president Zarina Ismail said Malaysia and Indonesia should come up with a more efficient mechanism that could speed up foreign workers' recruitment.

She said the number of documents required in the process of acquiring migrant workers should be reduced.

“I ask that our Prime Minister take the never-ending issue of foreign labour in our country very seriously. Both countries need one another to strengthen their economy.

“The approval process to acquire foreign workers takes a long time and has many implications for all parties,” she said.

She also said the memorandum of understanding on the recruitment and protection of Indonesian domestic helpers should be refined for both countries to reach a resolution.

“We hope this issue can be resolved with the wisdom and consensus of both countries,” she added.

Agreeing with Zarina is Association of Employment Agencies Malaysia (PAPA) vice-president Suresh Tan who also called for a smoother recruitment and stressed that the process should be transparent as well.

“PAPA wants a smoother, faster, lower cost and transparent application system without involving any third parties except the licensed recruitment agencies from both countries,” he said.

Anwar will be visiting Indonesia in his first official visit since becoming Prime Minister.

He will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir.

He will be meeting President Jokowi Widodo during his two-day visit to Jakarta that will begin on Jan 8.

The two leaders are expected to discuss issues relating to border demarcation, trade, palm oil and migrant workers.

It is likely that the situation in Myanmar will come up, as Indonesia will hold the chairmanship of Asean this year.