

6P programme kicks off

> Exercise to register, pardon illegal foreign workers runs alongside biometric registration of legal ones

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KUALA LUMPUR: The 6P programme for the registration and amnesty of illegal foreign workers under the biometric system began yesterday in all 198 immigration offices in the peninsula.

The offices will be open 24 hours until Aug 14, Home Ministry deputy secretary-general (Registration and Immigration) Datuk Alwi Ibrahim said in a statement yesterday.

He said the programme runs simultaneously with the biometric registration of legal foreign workers which was originally scheduled to end July 31 but has been extended indefinitely.

“To concentrate on the registration of illegals, the immigration offices will allocate 90% of its counter operations for the 6P programme while the remaining 10% will be used to deal with the registration of legal workers,” said Alwi.

Apart from immigration offices, the 6P programme is also being conducted in 336 managing companies which have been appointed by the government to help in the registration process.

“To date, a total of 1,639 locations are handled by these companies under the supervision of 389 immigration officers,” he said, adding the companies have suggested for the opening of 111 more locations, which are subject to confirmation.

Alwi also stressed on the importance of interaction between the immigration and the appointed companies. “This is to prevent problems such as last-minute logistic issues and computer systems not compatible with the software used in the operations.”

As of Sunday, a total of 767,068 legal foreign workers had been registered.

Meanwhile, in an immediate response, Malaysian Employers Federation executive



Illegal foreign workers queue at the Putrajaya immigration office as the 6P programme got under way yesterday.

director Shamsuddin Bardan said focus should be placed on registering the illegal immigrants, while the biometric registration of legal workers could be put on hold for the time being.

“Since the biometric registration first started on July 13, there had been severe congestion at immigration offices, due to a lack of manpower and resources,” he said, while stressing that the process had resulted in a loss of productivity for employers.

On the appointment of companies, Shamsuddin told *theSun* they could be in it to only profit from the illegal immigrants.

As such, he said the government should reconsider putting the matter into their own hands instead of going through a middleman.

Tenaganita executive director Irene Fernandez had also raised similar concerns during a press conference last week.

“Which are the companies that had been appointed and what criteria were applied in picking them?”

“The various changes to the biometric registration exercise and the amnesty programme since it was first announced suggest strongly that this whole undertaking is poorly planned lacking a clear objective,” she said.

Malaysian Trade Union Council secretary-general Abdul Halim Mansor said legalising the workers should be the responsibility of employers and they should bear all costs incurred.

“The immigration department should remind employers not to make any deduction from the workers’ salary. The programme should benefit migrant workers and not the employers or companies and appointed agents,” he said.