

Streamline recruitment, management of migrant workers under HR Ministry: MEF

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Malaysian Employers Federation Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the body believes that as the labour regulator in the country and having enough enforcement capacity, the Human Resources Ministry would be able to resolve most of the issues on recruitment and management of migrant workers. – Malaysian Employers Federation pic, February 17, 2022

KUALA LUMPUR – The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has proposed that the recruitment and management of migrant workers, including migrant domestic workers, be placed under one ministry for efficiency and business efficacy.

MEF president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the mandate should be given to the Human Resources Ministry (MOHR) to act as a one-stop ministry to administer and manage the recruitment of migrant workers under the “One Channel System”.

“MOHR can get all the requirements approved instead of cross-ministry involvement, which wastes too much time on bureaucracy and additional costs.

“We believe MOHR, being the custodian of labour working with employers and unions, should be the one-stop ministry,” he said in a statement today.

Syed Hussain said MEF believes that as the labour regulator in the country and having enough enforcement capacity, MOHR would be able to resolve most of the issues on recruitment and management of migrant workers.

“Due to the freeze on recruitment of migrant workers and the inability to replace those whose Temporary Employment Visit Pass expired over the last two years, employers are facing serious shortages of workers. Businesses are losing billions, and the longer we wait, the more we lose.

“As an example, palm oil plantations face an acute shortage of harvesters that continue to result in loss of revenue for planters of more than RM1 billion per month and income to the government due to loss in palm oil yield.

“The palm oil industry may not be able to compete with that of Malaysia's neighbours by virtue of higher costs of sales and wastage,” he said.

Therefore, Syed Hussain said the government should urgently address the shortage of more than 75,000 workers in the plantation sector.

He also claimed that even though the government approved the intake of 32,000 new migrant workers in September 2021, until now, the workers are not yet present in Malaysia.

Syed Hussain also said that the construction sector in the country is facing a serious shortage of workers, causing some major construction projects to fall behind schedule.

“Shortage of workers severely impacted production (especially for the electrical and electronic industries) and disrupted supply chains and business operations, resulting in delays and being unable to meet new orders from both local and foreign buyers,” he said. –

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