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KUALA LUMPUR

No stopping influx of workers

Only 19 per cent of 2 million illegals registered under amnesty programme

THE influx of illegal foreign workers is expected to continue as barely 18.95 per cent of over two million workers were legalised during the 6P amnesty programme which was to have ended on Feb 15.

Due to the poor turnout, the Home Ministry has extended the deadline to April 10 as the authorities legalise only 379,000 immigrants, including 94,856 who chose to return home.

Universiti Utara Malaysia political and international studies lecturer Md Shukri

Shuib said efforts to restrict the inflow of illegal immigrants would be futile for locals shun low-paying jobs in various industrial sectors, forcing employers to seek workers from abroad.

"Even though some locals are willing to take up the jobs, their number is rather small compared to huge job opportunities and rapid development in our vibrant industrial sectors.

"Lack of interest among locals to fill the vacuum in various industries has led to employers resorting to

hiring foreign workers to ensure that their operations run smoothly," he told Bernama.

On the low turnout in the 6P amnesty exercise, Md Shukri said it could be implemented effectively through concerted efforts from all quarters and not merely government agencies.

"Maybe it is better for the programme to be implemented continuously rather than on an ad-hoc basis for foreign workers will continue to flock to Malaysia due to our rapid development."

Universiti Teknologi Mara's Faculty of Administration and Policy Studies lecturer Dr Syarifah Syahirah Syed Sheikh said management companies appointed as intermediaries between employers and illegal foreign workers should be continuously monitored.

"Ironically, irresponsible people have taken advantage of loopholes in its implementation," she said, adding the 6P amnesty programme should be strengthened, added value and pursued aggressively. — Bernama