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No more extension to E-kad deadline: Immigration DG

Posted on 20 June 2017 - 08:48pm

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PUTRAJAYA: Application for Enforcement Card (E-Kad) to enable employment of illegal immigrants will end on June 30 and it will not be extended, said Immigration director-general Datuk Seri Mustafar Ali.

He said on June 28, 29, and 30, the operations of E-Kad registration at Immigration offices throughout the country would remain open until midnight to enable employers to seize the opportunity to register their workers.

"I am very disappointed as only 21,789 employers came forward to register their workers. The programme launched since Feb 15 is free and yet employers are still taking an indifferent attitude on the matter.

"Maybe they want to do it at the last minute which will cause congestion at Immigration offices in Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur. Maybe they are still hoping for an extension but it will not happen this time," he told a media conference on the E-Kad application, here today.

Mustafar said starting July 1, there would be massive operations to flush out illegal foreign workers in the country.

The E-Kad programme was launched to enable illegal immigrants to obtain valid work permits after going through several procedures set by the Home Ministry.

According to Mustafar, the department had issued 118,491 E-Kads and registered 131,269 illegal immigrants since Feb 15 to June 18 while the remaining number were in the process of getting approval.

"The figure is far below than our expectation of employers coming to register (their illegal workers). It is estimated, there are one million illegal immigrants in the country but the Immigration Department is targeting to register between 400,000 to 600,000 people via E-Kad. It appears the number is far from the target," he said.

Asked if there were applications from employers rejected, Mustafar said all applications would be reviewed thoroughly with the biometrics of employers and workers.

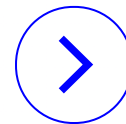
So far, he said only 4,616 employers were rejected because they had been blacklisted due to various worker problems in criminal activities as well as employers who had yet to register with the Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM).

He said only five industries were allowed to apply for E-Kad, and 63,186 had been issued to the construction sector, service (32,521), manufacturing (10, 477), plantation (5,716) and agriculture (6,591).

Checks found many employers and foreign workers had gathered at the Immigration office compound here to register their illegal foreign workers before the deadline on June 30. — *Bernama*

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