

## RM100k maximum fine soon for employers who hire illegal foreign workers

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By **HASHINI KAVISHTRI KANNAN** - January 12, 2017 @ 8:09pm

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PUTRAJAYA: Employers who hire illegal foreign workers can expect to pay a heavy price soon, once the Employment Restriction Act 1968 is amended.

Under the amendment, the errant employers may have to pay a whopping RM100,000 as the maximum fine for the offence, a jump from the present RM50,000.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Paul Low Seng Kuan said the amendment, scheduled to be tabled in Parliament in March, aims to address concerns raised by employers whose workers abscond.

"Many employers have raised their concern over issues of foreign workers running away, therefore this move will ensure that unscrupulous employers do not employ these runaway workers.

"This is a prohibitive measure to safeguard the employers and address possible security issues involving illegal workers," he said after a dialogue session with employers here today.

The amendment aims to deter employers from hiring illegal foreign workers. Such workers, once caught, will be deported.

The dialogue session, chaired by Immigration Department director-general Datuk Seri Mustafar Ali, saw more than 100 employers and representatives from various associations voicing out their concerns on the Employers Mandatory Commitment, which came into force on Jan 1.

Low said, upon taking into account the employers' request for a grace period on the levy payment, the government has decided to defer the implementation to Jan 1, 2018.

"This policy of employers paying the levy on behalf of their foreign workers was already in place since 2013 but it was reversed following requests from most employers.

"Again we have taken employer's concern into consideration and decided to postpone it to Jan 1, 2018," he said.

Low added that he would bring up the rehiring programme fee of RM1,134.52 of foreign worker permits via My EG Services (MyEG) to the government and relevant authorities.

"I have taken note of the complaint and we will look into the process itself. Obviously, there must be value added (element) to (charge) such fees. I will have to look into this," he said.