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**THE STAR – IMMIGRATION AWARE OF LONG QUEUES AND THIRD PARTY INVOLVEMENT – PG.03**

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**Power to influence**  
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**EXCLUSIVE**

**Queue numbers ring**

StarMetro reveals syndicates at Immigration Department offices who take advantage of the long waiting period by selling counter numbers, overruling the first-come, first-served order. 2 & 3

A test of patience: Employers sitting on the floor outside the Immigration office in Shah Alam as they wait for the counters to open. Inset: A man placing his folder of documents at a bus stop opposite Kompleks PKNS in his bid to join the queue.

# Going by touts' rules

Illegal sale of counter numbers at govt office adds to frustration of long queues

Stories and photos  
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**S**YNDICATES are taking advantage of the long queues snaking outside Immigration Departments for submission of foreign worker documents, to sell counter numbers.

StarMetro's investigation reveals that it can take up to 39 hours before a queue number is obtained from the Immigration Department counters at Shah Alam and Putrajaya for matters related to foreign workers.

The congestion has led to a thriving black market business to sell numbers to those unwilling to queue up.

While in most cases the official queue numbers could be obtained in 15 hours, some employers claim that the process could even stretch up to three days during peak periods.

Checks revealed that the process of obtaining the number starts as far ahead as 5pm the day before, although the numbers are only given out when the counters open at 8am.

In Shah Alam, the "booking" begins at a bus stop located at Persiaran Tasik opposite Kompleks PKNS in Shah Alam where the Selangor Immigration Department is located.

The queue starts at the spot where an employer places a folder with the name of his company and No.1 on the outside. More employers or their representatives join the



**Starting early:** Employers placing their folders on a platform outside Kompleks PKNS in a bid to queue up.



**Long wait:** At the Putrajaya office, the queue continues from outside to the office as folders and bags are placed in a line while waiting for the counters to open.

queue by lining up their folders. Most will insert the folders into a plastic sheet so that the documents will not get wet in the rain.

By 7pm, the number of folders would have reached 50, alongside a large number of people milling

around the bus stop.

At this point, one or two employers would transfer the folders to the pavement outside Kompleks PKNS.

The folders will be placed along the pavement in a long row according to their numbers.

Newcomers will join the queue by placing their folders. This goes on through the night, with people hanging around the pavement waiting for the Immigration Department to open.

However, some employers would leave and return the next day.

At about 5am, a human chain will start to build with some 200 people waiting in the queue. It starts from the main entrance of the complex. They are only allowed to go to the second floor of the Immigration Department at 7.30am when the office opens.

However, StarMetro investigations revealed that the number offered by the counter do not tally with the ones marked on the folders.

The day's first 30 numbers for the foreign workers' counters are usually taken up by the syndicate.

It is learnt that touts sell them to employers who do not wish to wait in the queue for hours.

The first 10 numbers are allegedly sold for RM100 each and the subsequent 20 numbers for RM50 each. During peak seasons, the rates go up.

Syndicate members will appear outside the PKNS Kompleks around 9pm and dictate the order of numbers.

## Tell us your stories

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## Top 10 Pet Peeves on Trains

From the person who leans on the rail to inconsiderate passengers who refuse to give up their seats to people in need, there are always those who make our public transport experience an unpleasant one. MOB takes a look at some of the pet peeves that people have while taking the train.

## Vote for your favourite nasi briyani eatery

The voting phase for the best Nasi Briyani in the Klang Valley has kicked into high gear in The Star People's Food Awards. MOBbers have until Jan 31 to vote and help their favourite nasi briyani eatery win the award. Log on to [mob.com.my](http://mob.com.my) to vote for your favourite nasi briyani eatery in the Klang Valley. Those who nominate, vote or successfully share a link stand a chance to win attractive prizes.



# Immigration aware of long queues and third-party involvement

THE Selangor Immigration Department says third-party involvement is strongly discouraged as it is unfair to those who have been waiting in the queue.

An official for the department told *StarMetro* that the department was unable to stop employers from queuing up outside their office from a day earlier.

"We have taken various measures to prevent third parties," he said, adding the department would not hesitate to act against unscrupulous people who collect money from the public.

He was responding to claims that touts were dictating the process by enabling employers who pay for their numbers to beat the queue to obtain documentation for their foreign workers.

He said an official complaint should be lodged with the department before any action could be taken.

He said the practice of queuing up outside their office a day earlier had been going on for some time.

"We are aware of the presence of a long queue of people waiting outside our office during

the night and wee hours of the morning.

"However, we cannot stop people from doing this as our role only starts once they arrive at the counters to collect their numbers," he said.

The official said the employers and their representatives had resorted to queuing up overnight as they feared the numbers would run out.

"Only a limited amount of numbers are given out every day based on staff manpower," he said.

The official also said that

the introduction of the MyEG Services Bhd online system by the department from this month for renewal of foreign workers permits was aimed at easing congestion.

However, following protests, employers now have the option of renewing work permits of their foreign workers at Immigration counters but only until Feb 28.

This followed unhappiness expressed by employers and other groups who had been forced to renew permits online via MyEG for an extra RM38 fee.



**Unfair:** When he arrived, Sabudin was No.17 in the queue but the official queue number he received was No.41.

## Similar syndicate spotted in Putrajaya

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It is learned that the fees have already been collected a day earlier from customers who are required to meet them at about 5am the next day.

The syndicate will then place the bags of their customers in front of others waiting in the queue.

At 7am, the syndicate member will get everyone to line up in a row before ushering them to the Immigration office on the second floor of the complex.

Checks also revealed that a similar situation prevails at the department's office in Putrajaya where employers also start to queue up outside the building from as early as 9pm the night before.

Employers were spotted sitting on the five-foot way around the Immigration Department headquarters in Putrajaya.

Chirara Kannan of Jan-berry Sdn Bhd said the process was unacceptable and employers had been suffering for the past three years.

He said the lack of numbers given out to meet the huge demand had led to the situation.

"Employers and their representatives have been putting up with this situation for too long.

"There is no certainty that one will be able to get a number even if you queue up at 5am," said Chirara, who came to process the check-out memo for his foreign

workers.

Chirara said the touts dictated the order of the queue.

"I was the first to place my folder at the bus stop but the touts who appeared at the platform had altered my number to 47," he said.

Sabudin Saad who is a director of a manufacturing company, said he waited from 5pm the previous day to obtain a queue number for submission of check-out memo for his foreign workers.

"After waiting for 18 hours, I was told that there were no more numbers available and I had no choice but to return today.

"I waited in the queue since 4pm yesterday before I got my number at 8.30am this morning," he said.

Sabudin said he was shocked that the counter gave him No 41 although he was the 17th person in the queue.

He said some employers sought the assistance of touts to get an earlier number from those who stood in line.

K. Appasamay of Sani Emas Sdn Bhd said he had been waiting at the Putrajaya office since 4am to get his number.

He said the practice of queuing up a day earlier had been going on for years and it was time the department introduced a proper system to overcome the problem.

"Employers should not be subjected to this sort of treatment," he said.