

DATE: **31ST JANUARY 2015 (SATURDAY)**

MEDIA: **THE STAR ONLINE – BESTINET MODULES PUT ON HOLD**

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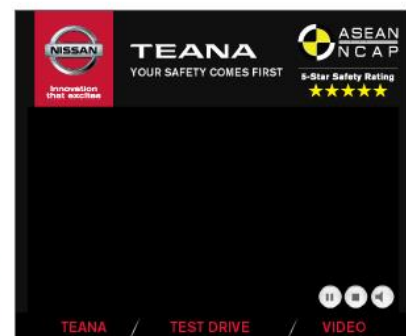
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Bestinet modules put on hold

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PETALING JAYA: The controversial Foreign Workers Centralised Management System (FWCMS) by Bestinet Sdn Bhd has been postponed with immediate effect.

The Immigration Department announced yesterday that FWCMS' modules for biometric health checks and e-visa services, which had been made mandatory since Jan 15, were now on hold.

Its deputy director-general Datuk Sakib Kusmi said the postponement would enable the department and the Home Ministry to consider relevant policies and review feedback from various parties, especially employers.

"With this postponement, all VDR (Visa with Reference) applications can be made at Immigration counters starting today (Friday).

"All applications made over Immigration counters should be conducted by the employers or employers' representatives," he said in a statement.

When contacted, a Bestinet spokesman said the company would look into the matter and call for a press conference soon to explain further.

A source confirmed that the department had not decided how long the system would be postponed.

"The department has to iron out a few matters relating to policies following the feedback and opinions it has received from various parties.

"They (the department) will make an announcement once the policy matters have been dealt with," the source said, adding that Bestinet had been informed of the department's decision.

Prior to the official announcement, a screenshot of a letter on the purported postponement was widely circulated as early as Thursday.

The letter, which was issued by the department's Foreign Workers division director Farah Adura Hamidi, clearly stated that the system would be postponed.

According to it, Farah Adura was acting on behalf of Immigration director-general Datuk Mustafa Ibrahim.

When contacted, Mustafa confirmed the letter's authenticity but did not elaborate.

The recent developments came after *The Star* highlighted the grouses of businesses over the ministry's decision to outsource its services to private companies.

Thirty business associations and chambers of commerce had jointly issued a strong statement against the outsourcing of services by the Home Ministry to two private companies which they said further complicated the process of bringing foreign workers to Malaysia.

The outsourcing of foreign worker permit renewals to MyEG Services Bhd and mandatory use of Bestinet's FWCMS to process the VDR or "calling visa" for foreign workers also pushed up costs, they added.

The department's statement yesterday, however, did not mention any changes to the mandatory MyEG online services.

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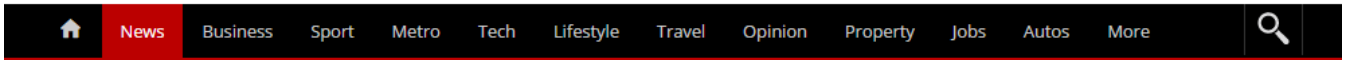
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MEDIA: **THE STAR ONLINE – GROUPS LAUD MOVE TO POSTPONE FWCMS IMPLEMENTATION**

Retrieved from: <http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/01/31/Groups-laud-move-to-postpone-FWCMS-implementation/>



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Groups laud move to postpone FWCMS implementation

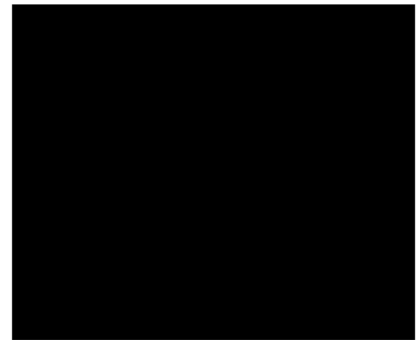


PETALING JAYA: Business groups have lauded the Government's move to postpone with immediate effect the implementation of the Foreign Workers Centralised Management System (FWCMS).

They said it was good that the Government was listening to feedback from the public and taking immediate action.

Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and the Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) deputy secretary-general Tan Sri Teo Chiang Kok said the mandatory service had only added obstacles for Malaysian employers.

"We are convinced that when a Government department contracts and outsources a process, it must be because it is more efficient and cost-saving, and the cost of outsourcing should not be passed to the public and consumers.



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"All outsourced processes that do not meet these cost and efficient objectives but merely add obstacles and processes should be suspended and withdrawn," he said yesterday.

On Wednesday, ACCCIM had led 30 business associations to jointly issue a strong statement against the outsourcing of services by the Home Ministry to two private companies which they said further complicated the process of bringing foreign workers to Malaysia.

The outsourcing of foreign worker permit renewals to MyEG Services Bhd and mandatory use of Bestinet Sdn Bhd's Foreign Workers Centralised Management System (FWCMS) to process the Visa with Reference (VDR) or "calling visa" for foreign workers also pushed up their costs, they said.

While the businesses said they were supportive of migrating towards e-recruitment, making these new processes mandatory was "completely unacceptable".

The Immigration Department, in a statement yesterday, announced it was postponing with immediate effect the implementation of the FWCMS system to obtain and study feedback from the public.

However, there was no mention about the mandatory MyEG services in the statement.

Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said they hoped the removal of the mandatory service would be made a "permanent feature".

"People must be given the option of using the online service or going to the Immigration Department counter.

"All the issues and grouses must be discussed with stakeholders before the system is reintroduced," he said.

Malaysian Association of Foreign Maid Agencies (Papa) president Jeffrey Foo said the postponement of FWCMS was the "right step forward".

"These are crucial matters that affect the public and the right decisions must be made," he said, adding that matters related to bringing in foreign workers should be handed over from the Home Ministry to the Human Resource Ministry.

Malaysian Textile Manufacturers Association president Datuk Seri Tan Thian Poh also welcomed the announcement.

"Due to the weakening ringgit and low wages, Malaysia is becoming increasingly unattractive to foreign workers.

"Imposing these additional fees and requirements have made recruitment agents there unhappy and even more difficult to bring in foreign workers," he said.

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