

## The Star: Consider implications before hiring maids from India

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IT is better for Malaysians to forget about employing maids from India due to the stringent conditions laid down by New Delhi, which local employers will find intimidating.

India is one of four countries identified by Kuala Lumpur to help reduce dependence on just a few nations in the recruitment of maids.

Those who need such domestic help may be willing to meet the RM1,400 monthly salary, but what is hard to swallow is that the terms and conditions of work are stacked against the employer.

It must be the most one-sided agreement employers have come across. One has to agree that some protection must be accorded to the maid but for the employer to meet all the financial commitments even if the maid is at fault is really quite ridiculous.

In fact, no sane person is likely to agree to such a one-sided arrangement where the maid can do no wrong and, even if she does, the employer must still pay the price.

If the maid should break the contract and walk out with or without just cause, the employer will still have to settle whatever compensation and wages due to her.

Perhaps the Indian government should just come right out and say it is not interested in letting its citizens go overseas to work as domestic help.

The impression given is that India has so many jobs available that it is a favour to allow its nationals to go overseas to work.

But this is just one side of the coin. The other is that from the experience of some who employed Indian maids, they were far from ideal in carrying out their duties.

For example, they may feel it is beneath them to do some of the household chores that form part of the normal functions of a maid. Employers were told that they never did such tasks back home.

Therefore, it is in the interest of those who wish to recruit such workers despite the one-sided conditions against employers to look before they leap to avoid disappointment, frustration and losing money.

As for maids from China, women's organisations among these Wanita MCA are dead against this proposal because their presence could disrupt family harmony. In any case, there are enough of them in the country at present, and some of them are causing a lot of social and moral problems.

It is a pity that so many working couples have to depend on foreign maids to look after their home and children. Unfortunately, local girls are no longer eager to join this profession.

If they should be available, their asking price would be too high for middle-income households. It is not good for children to be brought up by maids, especially those from other countries.

They will grow up under the influence of their maids who will expose them to different values and cultures. It is time working couples review this issue and consider other options.