

AN ANALYSIS OF SYRIAN MIGRANTS' TEMPORARY RELOCATION PROGRAMME IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia's commitment to asseverate about international human rights violations encouraging. Malaysia's participation is not merely a round table space but instead acts in helping the oppressed. One of Malaysia's latest commitments in receives Syrian refugees into Malaysia under the Syrian Migrants Temporary Relocation Programme in Malaysia. Our study seeks to explore the migrant challenges under this program. This study interviewed an official Malaysian Humanitarian Aid and Relief's migrant officer; one Syrian refugee; and two Syrian migrants. Also, the study employs participant observation to acquire in-depth scenario in this program. Our findings show the program had benefited many Syrian migrants, living and working legally, enabling further studies in Malaysia and getting a 50 per cent discount at any government hospitals. Nevertheless, the program's applicant divulges card management processes; waiting on the interview, the card's approval and renewal taking an extended period. Besides, we found that migrants who already had the card need to resend the card to obtain a working visa stamp with a working offer letter, and there were government agencies oblivious of the existence of this program, and there was an appropriate benefit given by the Malaysian government such as driving license and bank card. To sum up, the Malaysian government should empower and strengthen the management to be more systematized instead of persecuting Syrian migrants.

Keywords: IMM13, migrants, PPSMS, refugees, Syria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Forced migration has significantly grown over the last thirty years, becoming a prominent political and social issue in many parts of the world. The term of forced migration grants us to perceive involuntary moves in all their manifestations. Generally, forced migration not solely includes refugees and asylum seekers, but anyone forced to leave their homes due to violence, persecution, development projects, natural disasters or human-made catastrophes. The process of human displacement and forced movement devastates people's livelihood, who then become acute than before (Anh, 2006 & Castles, 2006).

For Malaysia, located in Southeast Asia's geopolitical region, represents an instance of a developing country that has long enticed transnational migrants, predominantly from the region, for innumerable reasons. While most migrants move to Malaysia for economic reasons, many migrants, refugees, asylum seekers who have fled conflicts and political persecution from countries (P.Ramasamy, 2006) such as Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, Palestine and Somalia. The proof, the country is home to more than two million documented migrant workers, between two and four million undocumented migrant workers, and more than 170,000 refugees (Nazri et al., 2021). Hitherto, though Malaysia is still a focal point for refugees as a protection settlement hub, the country has not decided to become a convention member due to refugee policy often depends on the assessment of Malaysian leaders in refugees' case, the type and number of refugees entering the country (Arzura, 2012). Malaysia also concerned that recognition would be an attractive factor for more international refugees entering the country (Hoffstaedter, 2017).

Nevertheless, as a harmonious country, Malaysia plays a crucial role in creating multilateral cooperation through commitment participation in various fields. The bond of unity based on regional understanding essential to building a lasting network with other countries (Jali, Redzuan, Samah, & Rashid, 2001). Malaysia's foreign policy in regional and international relations focuses on peace and harmony. The proof when Malaysia actively involved in building relationships and providing decent cooperation in international organizations such as The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nation (UN). On October 1, 2015, in the 70th Session of the General Assembly of the Organization United Nations or United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the former Prime Minister of Malaysia (Najib Razak) expressed his commitment to received 3,000 Syrian migrants on a humanitarian basis within three years, starting 2015 to 2018 under Syrian Migrants Temporary Relocation Programme in Malaysia or formally known *Program Penempatan Sementara Migran Syria* (PPSMS). Syrian migrants' recruitment since 2015 from host countries as well as with existing Syrian refugees in Malaysia. In registration progress, applicants are obliged to several processes; security and health screening under the Special Task Force PPSMS. As of March 2018, PPSMS secretariats managed to gather 2,600 Syrian migrants who passed the pre-determined screening and successfully joined PPSMS (Zainudin, 2020). Nevertheless, there some inconvenience confronted by migrants despite having a temporary permit which confirms their presence in Malaysia. In this regard, our study explores the migrant challenges under this program that could make an organizer empower the management system.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE FORCED MIGRATION

The current migration trend has placed the issue of migration as a significant agenda at the international level. The international migration phenomenon's magnitude and complexity be considered a mainstream indicator in development policy. Every country has affected by migration issues; as a country of origin, transit or destination (Global Migration Group, 2008). In the field of international relations, migration emerges as a security issue when it is associated with dislocation from a geopolitical aspect specifically with the end of the Cold War which involved social and political transitions as well as the development of the era of globalization (Othman & Idris, 2015). Migration involving mass movements is often associated with a poor migrant background to a more affluent and prosperous country (Selm, 2005).

In other circumstances, paradoxically force is also a reason that impedes people from free movement. On many occasions, the plight of the displaced people is in the hands of power controllers, who define who among the displaced are entitled to rights protection and not, and who among the displaced will get assistance and will be excluded? Among the dispute's issues in the field of forced migration is the dividing line between the displaced population who cross state borders; refugees and those who are displaced but still living within the state's borders, the so-called 'internally displaced people' IDPs (Tirtosudarmo, 2006).

An alternative approach, which is more congruent with the day to day the refugee term, differentiates refugees from other migrants by the causes of their movement (Hugo, 2006). One of the critical issues facing states is which categories of migrants to let into the state, which to keep out, and how to tell the difference. The question of "who is a migrant?" thus become significant. The definition of a migrant is referred to as any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born and has confronted by some critical social relations. However, it is the policy in some countries to consider a person as a migrant when born in that country (UNESCO, 2017). In-depth understanding of the connotation and type of migrant, Adamson (2006) distinguish migrants into:

a) Voluntary migration

Individuals who have left the home of their own accord, whether it be to pursue economic opportunities, for personal enrichment, to be reunited with their families for other reasons.

b) Forced migration

Force migration arises from various causes ranging from human slavery to ethnic cleansing, forced expulsion, and deportations, including refugees and displaced persons. Many of the major migrations throughout history have occurred as a result of forced migration or expulsion.

c) Economic migration

Economic migrants leave their countries in pursuit of economic opportunities and employment.

d) Political migration

Political migration seeks to cross borders to escape political persecution or violent conflict instead of crossing borders searching for economic opportunities.

e) Illegal migration

Illegal migration same to irregular migration, undocumented migration, or clandestine migration, including those who are smuggled, trafficked, or enter with forged or no papers.

f) Legal migration

Legal migration defined to immigrants crossing international borders through an organized entry channel and having complete identity documents.

g) Permanent migration

Permanent migration crossing national borders leads to permanent resettlement, which many traditionally think of as “immigration.”

h) Temporary migration

Temporary migration would include guest workers, seasonal labour, or students. There is also a range of border crossers whose status is less clear-cut on tour, international civil servants working outside their origin country, military force abroad, and other.

In this case, our research focuses on forced migration change status to legal migration when the refugees will be as an IMM13 holder under the Syrian Migrants Temporary Relocation Programme in Malaysia. The Malaysian government emphasized migration issues because it involves informal entry, then it is feared it would negatively impact national security and interests. Uncontrolled cross-border issues also impact the country's capacity and authority through three key factors: the ability to preserve national sovereignty; national stability and balance of power; and the ability to manage conflicts within the borders of regional countries (Rahim, Tajuddin & Bakar, 2015).

3. MALAYSIA EXPERIENCES

Malaysia was honoured to host the International Islamic Conference in 1969, which 23 Muslim and non-Muslim countries attended. The conference was considered the beginning of a revival and cooperation among Islamic countries. Following the conference in Kuala Lumpur, the Islamic Government summit was held in Rabat, Morocco on September 1969 and began establishing the OIC. The Israeli invasion of the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem on August 21, 1969, one of the main discussions in which delegates unanimously urged Islamic countries to convene a summit of state heads to discuss the issue. On August 25, 1967, the Arab Foreign Ministry ministers at a meeting in Cairo, Egypt decided to hold a summit of Islamic countries to discuss the burning of the al-Aqsa mosque. Then, Malaysia continuously shows its concern for the persecution victim regardless of religion, ethnic or country through several approaches (Salleh, 2003).

First, we perceive Malaysia commitment first received refugees from Vietnam in 1975. In Vietnamese circumstances, the Malaysian government and several agencies, particularly non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have developed Bidong Island, a Vietnamese refugee settlement. The island has convenience with longhouses, hospitals, clinics, temples, churches, and posts offices, vocational schools and shops. Second, in the Bosnia war; Malaysia received about 200 refugees from Bosnia in 1992 placed in Sarawak and around Kajang, Selangor. The Malaysian government then took the initiative by creating a Temporary Protection Program and has helped protect 300 Bosnians in Malaysia (Enh, 2017).

Third, in 2005, Malaysia issued between 32,000 and 35,000 IMM13 work permits to Acehese migrants from Indonesia which the cost of the permit between 162 and 180 ringgits (about \$47 and \$52), was valid for two years and were renewable. The government did not permit the refugees to engage in trade but legally live in the country, allowed them to work and access formal education. Lucidity, the permits did not tie their bearers to single employers. Continuously in 2006, Malaysia began to issue IMM13 permits to Muslim Rohingya refugees from Myanmar but stopped amid accusations of corruption in the issuing process that left some 4,000 Rohingyas holding receipts proving they paid for IMM13 permits without the permits themselves (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2008).

4. METHODOLOGY

This research-based on a case study employs the primary and secondary data that are collectively forming a qualitative approach. Primary data employed with two methods, which are semi-structured interview which the questions asked could be answered openly without restriction and concurrently with participant observation. The main informant has been selected from the Malaysian Humanitarian Aid and Relief (MAHAR) officer due to its involvement in Syrian migrant. The interview session conducted at MAHAR office, Sri Rampai, Kuala Lumpur. The informant's name shared as permitted by the informant.

Meanwhile, for an interview session with Syrian refugees and migrant, three informants had been selected from different phases to understand the social interaction among them better before and after the IMM13 card was applied. Due to respect informants' privacy and security, this research will employ the code to replace the name as informant 1, informant 2 and informant 3. The details of interviews as below:

Table 1.1: Details list of interviews

Informant	Date	Place
Informant Ibrahim	13 February 2019	Sri Rampai, Kuala Lumpur
Informant 1	24 February 2019	Kajang, Selangor
Informant 2	7 March 2019	Cyberjaya, Selangor
Informant 3	26 February 2019	Kajang, Selangor

For the participant observation technique, the researcher conducted participant observations at the MAHAR office, during the IMM13 card process for refugees and migrants as well as with their activities. Also, to understand the social situation of the migrants more profoundly, the researchers have visited the refugees and migrant's area around Kajang and Cyberjaya.

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION: SYRIAN MIGRANTS TEMPORARY RELOCATION PROGRAMME

Syrian migrants who have passed the process of security screening and health screening under the PPSMS operation will be given PLS (Long Term) IMM13. The pass is intended to confirm their presence in Malaysia for six months and could be renewed from time to time. Exemption from the condition of possession of a travel document; a passport has given by the Minister under section 55 of Act 155 and section 4 of Act 1502 to migrants to enable the IMM13 visit pass to be issued legally following the existing immigration requirements. An IMM13 card does not entitle the applicant to carry a dependent pass (dependant pass); therefore, each applicant must be present in-person to register at the MAHAR (Zainuddin, 2020).

To further strengthen this program, Malaysia has established a synergistic relationship with Syrian humanitarian NGOs, particularly in managing education, health, and welfare. The NGOs as follows (Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2016):

1. Humanitarian Care Malaysia (MyCare)
2. Syria Care Malaysia
3. Malaysia Humanitarian Aid and Relief (MAHAR)
4. *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* (ABIM)
5. IMAM Response and Relief Team (IMARET)
6. Muslim Care
7. *Pertubuhan Sinar Damsyik Malaysia* (PERSIDAM)
8. Malaysia LifeLine for Syria
9. *Yayasan Restu*

However, MAHAR is the prominent NGOs involved in implementing this program, especially as a platform to communicate with the Home Ministry, Immigration, and Royal Malaysia Police. MAHAR was established to aid and empower those who are facing a humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the NGOs came into existence to promote humanitarian spirit across religion, racial, geographical, and political borders. Apart

from that, MAHAR also promotes youth development in volunteerism by instilling humanitarian and volunteerism among them.

In this PPSMS program, MAHAR's primary task to assist the government in providing the necessities to the migrants. On the other hand, there have four another job scope for MAHAR, which are:

1. Registration

On behalf of the government, MAHAR is responsible for registering and recording applications for PPSMS.

2. Consultation

MAHAR provides the consultation services to the PPSMS applicants and members regarding the program, and it assists them in integrating with the community

3. Facilitator

MAHAR was appointed to be a facilitator to manage the program's overall and be an intermediary between the PPSMS registered Syrians and government agencies, specifically Home Minister, police, immigration and hospital.

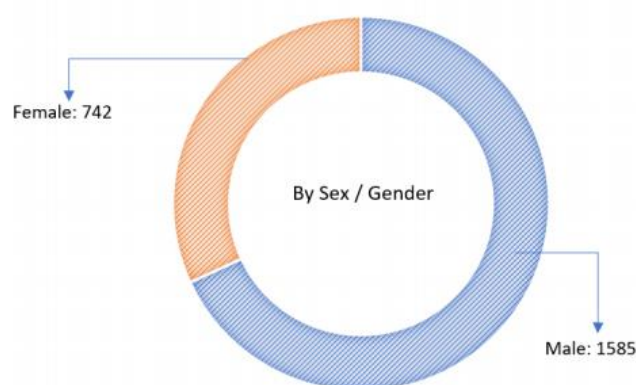


Figure 1.1: Statistic of Sex
Source: MAHAR Profile (2019)

Based on MAHAR's statistic, until December 2018, Figure 1.1 shows that 1585 are male cardholders and 742 are female cardholders, total up 2327.

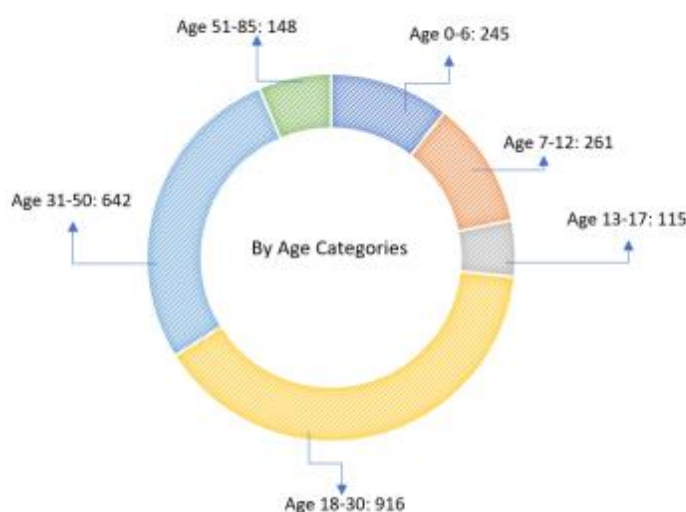


Figure 1.2: Statistic of Age
Source: MAHAR Profile (2019)

Meanwhile, figure 1.2 for age category shows that the highest number of cardholders is from the young age between 18 to 30 with 916, followed by age 31 to 50 of 642 people. For children, ages 7 to 12, 261 card holders, 0 to 6 years old with 345 children, 148 people aged between 51 and 148 and age 13 to 17 with 115 hold the IMM13 card.

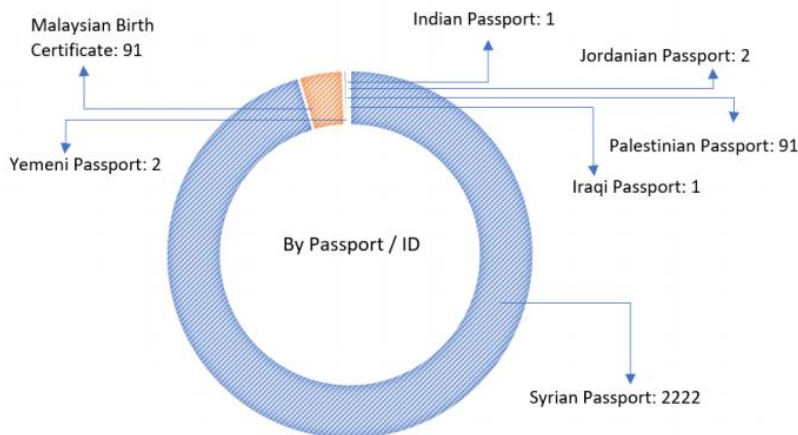


Figure 1.3: Statistic of Passport Holder
Source: MAHAR Profile (2019)

For passport holder’s category, Figure 1.3 indicated that most migrants are of Syria passports of 2222 and some of them also received IMM13 cards from passport from other countries with Syrian citizens namely Palestine, 91, Jordan and Yemen, 2 and Iraq and India, 1. A mother who gave birth to a child in Malaysia, even having a birth certificate in Malaysia but still allowing have an IMM13 card, and the figure shows a total of 91 who received it.

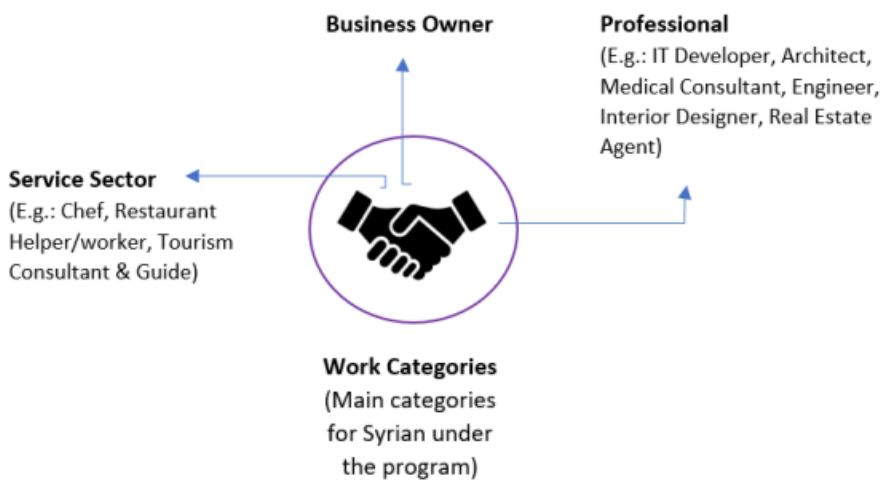


Figure 1.4: Statistic Type of Occupation
Source: MAHAR Profile (2019)

Figure 1.4 shows that IMM13 cardholders' work in several sectors includes service, business owner, and professional, but most of them are more interested in business with open-owned restaurants, notably those with substantial financial resources. Undoubtedly, many migrants have a good education background, allowing them to work as an internet developer, architect, medical consultant, engineer and interior designer.

There are four aspects of interest received by IMM13 holders, namely protection, life, education, and health. The holder is allowed to live in Malaysia legally in the protection area because it recognizes the cardholders. The duration of the card is one year and could be renewed and extended to the visa date. In terms of life, migrants allow working legally by having a working visa stamp on the card part. Besides,

migrants have travel rights to foreign countries and would not be bound by the law to stay in Malaysia forever as they are permitted to return to their home country after the war halt. In terms of education, the Syrian migrant children have right to access formal education under the government; primary and secondary level (depending on the school's decision whether or not to accept migrant children)-the documentation process primarily for supporting documents provided to students who wish to go to school and university. For students who intended to pursue their studies in the university, the IMM13 card is prohibited in such mode, but it could convert to a student visa without going overseas to renew the passport visa. For underprivileged students, who have the intention to further their studies, there is a small amount of financial aid allocated to them. In terms of health services, migrants receive a 50 per cent deduction at any government clinic and hospital (MAHAR Profile, 2019 & Ibrahim, 2019).

Explanation by Ibrahim (2019), in order to have the IMM13 card, the key terms set out, including Syrian refugees, refugees involved with the Syrian crisis, regardless of religion, culture, and ethnicity but rely on the police to find interviewing migrant candidates whether the candidate impacted Malaysia harmony or security and satisfying the health conditions outlined.

In managing this IMM13, there are some issues and challenges confronted by such as communication. Most Syrian migrants are incapable of communicating in English, making the MAHAR challenging to deal with them, notably if it involves legal and regulatory directions. Therefore, observation found that communication barriers caused some migrants to violate the Government and Mahar's instructions. Also, the difficulties emerged when some migrants fail to follow the established procedures. For instance, if the migrant wants to travel abroad, they supposedly apply to MAHAR's officer a month earlier in acquiring approval from the Immigration Department, but what occurs is that one of them goes straight to the airport. The acquisition of the IMM13 participant began in late 2015 and expected to expire in 2019. In the meantime, IMM13 cardholders still do not reach 3000 people.

The program is recognized officially by government departments and among government agencies involved in the IMM13 program, namely immigration, Home Ministry, Bukit Aman police, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. There are also some of those undisclosed about the IMM13 program. Despite the change of political regime that led the government, from the National Front to the Alliance of Hope, there are no changes in the IMM13 program, and the new government would continuously support this program.

5.1. The Reality

At the very outset of an IMM13 card application process; there are multi-ranges of issues and challenges confronted by Syrian migrants; they are holding IMM13 card, but unmoving having a problem related to adverse IMM13 cardholders. The findings of interviews and observations conducted with Syrian refugees and migrants categorized into critical themes such as follows:

5.1.1. The Entrance to Malaysia

Most of Syrian entered Malaysia by using a tourist visa, including informant 1, informant 2 and informant 3. For informant 1, she and family came to Malaysia in August 2016, and according to her statement, PPSMS has yet to introduce the card system during that time. Meanwhile, informant 2 arrived in Malaysia earlier than informant 1 which on August 2012 and he stated that:

"In the beginning, honestly, it was not run because in my time it was not that war, you know. Like It is ok, it was it only some in the street. Some arrested. It is not 100 per cent war it was like only some fight in the street. I see some people die in the street, but it is not like when I came here. I was planning I do not serve the army. After I graduate, I do not want to join the army".

By the time he moved out from Syria, the political upheaval had not been crucial, but the main reason he wants to flee from being a government army is that he intended pursuing his studies and getting ameliorates living standards. The last informant 3 was also an IMM13 card applicant in the third phase and came to Malaysia on February 26 with her three children. According to informant 3, her husband came over to Malaysia earlier in October 2017 and unemployed until December 2017. As he took a job at Arab Restaurant, Cyberjaya in January 2018 his visa has expired. He had been remanded by the authority and implicated him with two offences, namely visa termination and illegal work. This tragic incident happens two weeks after informant 3 arrival in Malaysia, and through the conversation with her, she exclaimed that:

“Initially, my husband has been arrested 15 days in Bukit Jalil lockup. After that, he brought to court, and the result was to send him to Sungai Buloh detention facility”.

For the time the husband in jail, she endeavoured in many ways trying to release her husband, including seeking MAHAR assistance. Unfortunately, MAHAR was refused to assist in the account of the issue has been taken by the court. The adamant efforts by Syrian refugee activists in Malaysia, notably in contacting Malaysia United Nation Refugee Agency (UNHCR) through the lawyer appointed led to the informant 3 husbands released in April 2018.

5.1.2. The Failure Process of Time Management

Informant 1 is the first phase applicant candidate who applied for IMM13 card before his two-week visa visitor expired-the application only for initial screening purpose, including health, blood, and urine tests. Meanwhile, for the second screening process with the Immigration Department and this requirement, it takes more than two months from the first procedure's date, and regrettably, the tourist visa expired concurrently.

As mentioned by informant 1, top management of IMM13 informed that the card would be given to only an immediate successful applicant who lives far apart from Kuala Lumpur like Penang. The senior officials have postponed card submission up to six months for those who live in the Kuala Lumpur area. She also added they were often facing difficulty in the card renewal process, whereby it took more than two months. When the card renewed, one statement letter will be produced by MAHAR. Informant 1 exclaimed:

“Most the clinic recognizes MAHAR, let me say Sungai Chua clinic recognizes MAHAR, but if I come with the paper that said I already give my card for renewing, they will not accept. Where is the yellow paper? Then you are keeping my yellow card for two months or more than I'm not getting my discount. They ask you one question? Where is your yellow card? My yellow is a card with immigration. Ok, then I cannot give you the discount”.

Some government agencies rejected the MAHAR letter and kept insisting them to display their IMM13 card. For example, when she went to the hospital to get vaccine injections for her baby and presented the MAHAR letter, the hospital refused to give to waive the amount of 50 per cent.

Informant 2 reapplied on March 2017 for the second phase IMM13 application, but alas, the date of application appeared on August 12 2017, and he informed MAHAR regarding the issue, and regrettably, there was no response. At long last, he was called for interview on October 2018 after a year the date of application. Once again, informant 1 waited tensely another one year to get his result and the card.

“I was waiting for MAHAR during this time MAHAR we have already done the interview, but no one reply, I was checking with a telegram that's there any news and during that time was the Malaysian government election — this thing. I decide to forget this MAHAR. I know some people get it”.

Informant 2 divulged that the Immigration Authority arrested him during a sudden raid in Cyberjaya. He was shopping at the grocery store at that dismal time but was released afterwards because his student visa still valid. Since the tragic incident, he is fretted about illegal arrest again by obliged authorities. Therefore, he works frantically from home as a media designer to financial support.

“MAHAR was finishing before seven months since I get the card. Why they don't let ask come and take it. Because its return it's valid for one year. So since it's valid for a year, I didn't get it. If the finish in July, I should get in July 2017”.

Informant 2 also stated based on agreement's benefits, the card should have a year to renew, but what he is experiencing, holding the card only for five months before renewing it in July 2019. The arising problem was due to the IMM13 card that was supposedly issued in July 2018, but he only received lengthy delays in February 2019.

In informant 3 case as an applicant IMM13 in the third phase, stated that she registered in March 2018. However, until March 2019, which almost a year, hitherto, she waiting tensely for the interview call, which solemnly makes her afraid if arrest by the immigration and police. Following the hectic procedural, her husband bumps into immigration or police authority every time, patrolling a nearby residential area, her husband will immediately close the shop.

Observations have figured out that some of the IMM13 applicants could not attend the interview session on the date has been scheduled due to some reason such as authority arrestment, away from Malaysia and family matters. For instance, there was a case where a Syrian boy in Cyberjaya has arrested for seven terrible months in immigration jail, and he had to wait for the next session. This gruelling detention led to emotional depression to this less fortunate boy.

5.1.3. Employment Visa

Initially, based on IMM13's contract, the migrants were allowed working legally, and it implemented for the first and second batch of migrants, but ever since the third batch, the rule has been restructured by the immigration. According to informant 2:

"MAHAR don't have a stamp for a working permit. It is the same for me, MAHAR and the UN."

The employed migrants or who intended to work must attach a job contract as a proof to get a stamp work in the card. This situation intricates the migrants because they must return with a job contract to obtain the stamp work once the card is received. The above-complicated procedure continuously happens during the renewal process. This new regulation also aggravates the migrant who self-employed because they do not have verification from their employer.

5.1.4. The Alertness PPSMS among Government Agencies

Through the observations and complaints, the finding discovered that some government agencies were unaware of PPSMS execution. The proof as told by informant 1, whereby the Road Transport Department unrecognized the program while government hospitals were sternly refused to give a 50 per cent discount that was supposed to give it to the cardholder.

"We all thanks to Malaysia's government, and we really appreciate what they are doing for us. But, sometimes we in real life, we are suffering from something. First, I think all Syrian will tell you the same if I go with my MAHAR card to non-immigration any type, for example, JPJ. If I go with my MAHAR to JPJ, they will not consider as a visa or as a stay. So, I want to, for example, do anything with JPJ they will not recognize this as stay, a legal stay. We are facing this problem. Let me say, for example, hospital. If I go to some hospital, what is this? This is Mahar. What is MAHAR? Addressing that this MAHAR has 50% discount, but some hospitals do not accept. Let me give you an example, Putrajaya hospital. What is this? I show them the paper. We are the first-class hospital, and we do not accept MAHAR anything. We do not give a discount."

Nevertheless, some government agencies unrecognized the IMM13 card as a special visa, for instance, when informant 1 wants to register her children at international schools:

"That goes not only for JPJ that goes for anything. School. If I go to an international school, I want to put my kids, and they will never accept this, they will say immigration will make a problem if we accept, so you have to convince them to give them the all the evidence, this is immigration stamp."

When her husband was detained by the police at the petrol station and disbelieves about IMM13 card, the story goes on and demanded roughly a thousand ringgit for release.

"They start to abuse them, scared them. They took all passport, all the MAHAR, UN they took everything, they said follow us. My husband drive follows them. Not so much people around, they took 1 thousand ringgits."

The mess situation was also corroborated by informant 2, which he would prefer to carry UNHCR cards instead of the IMM13 because:

"Be honest; personally I get MAHAR, but I don't hold it, I holding the UN card because some people said that they got a lot to stop by police and the police don't know MAHAR when they show them the UN, directly work."

Some of the Syrian youths also shared a depressing story as they were sent back to their origin country upon arrival at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport by Malaysian Immigration. For uncertain reasons, they were not allowed to enter Malaysia even though they came here for IMM13 card registration as per announcing Najib Razak's announcement. Following their disability to speak or communicate in English and looked dubious, they were unwelcoming to Malaysia.

5.1.5. Management

The findings identified that there were several issues in related to management as researchers noticed that most of the migrants complained about card design which does not represent the official government and also the quality of the card which fragile when exposed to rain as per stated by informant 2 below:

“The program needs a lot of improvement. One thing that it should be at least a plastic card. I did not hold this, honestly. MAHAR is better than the UN, but I’m holding the UN. Where I have to put it? It is not good for me as a designer”.

Based on informant 2 claimed, the card should be small in size, sturdy and easy to bring everywhere. Secondly, insufficient MAHAR staff could handle many migrants with various issues such as authority arrestment, card management, travel matters, and medical issues. Finally, since the migrants live all over states in Malaysia, informant 2 suggested MAHAR identify which area migrants live most. From the result, feasibly MAHAR could open up the branch office or provide a volunteer to assist the migrants, notably those who live far away from Kuala Lumpur such as Terengganu, Johor and Pulau Pinang.

5.1.6. IMM13 Benefits

Undeniably, PPSMS has grant virtue numerous Syrian migrants, but there has another issue regarding IMM13’s benefit has been raised as follows:

“Bank account. This is very important. Malaysia depends on the bank. Where ever you go, you depend on the bank. This is difficult sometimes when you have to carry a larger amount of money in your wallet. This is dangerous. What should I do, I do not have a bank account.”

According to informant 1, a bank account is essential because Malaysian depends on banks to make any transactions. She told that the landlord requested them to pay monthly rental by the bank, but it is insecure about bringing much money in hand. Informant 1 also shared that her husband having problems with salary payment as the employer will pay directly to the staff bank account instead of the cash method. This constraint has led to delay payment and took a few months to receive the wage. This problematic matter expressed by informant 2 as described below:

“One of the things, it is vital at least bank card. Twenty-seven years old I do not know how to use. It is vital”.

For informant 1, the management system of IMM13 card seems complicated to comprehend, and the promise will stay promises until it is burdensome the Syrian migrant’s life. Direct observation with other Syrian migrants could shed light the similar experience as per discussed themes above. There are also other migrants facing a challenging situation in Malaysia despite having IMM13 cards until they finally decided to return to Syria.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the various and complex cases discussed above, the IMM13 benefits contradict the fundamental purpose of the IMM13 inception. The Syrian migrants' plight seems to be a bit neglected induced by a weak management system by individual responsible bodies involved. This continuous poor migrant governance indirectly would tarnish a good reputation for Malaysia, and thus, improvisation is necessary. Hence, there are few ways forward to put on the account, such as follows:

1. To expedite the card management process
2. To disseminate information to all government agencies by Ministry of Home Affairs regarding IMM13 program
3. To simplify the bureaucracy procedural on visas and job contract
4. To coordinate the IMM13 card benefits to avoid a mess discrepancy between migrants and government agencies.

7. CONCLUSION

Malaysia's participation in international humanitarian issues is increasingly prominent. The Malaysian government employs various platforms either in the conference room or with the institution, to assist those in conflicts with humans. PPSMS is one of Malaysia's priceless efforts to help Syria's conflicts of war to



reduce the burden experienced by refugees from the country. While this noble quest comes from Malaysia's Government, most governments and even Syrian migrants assume that PPSMS is a MAHAR program. Therefore, this paper emphasises that PPSMS is the full official program by the Government of Malaysia rather than MAHAR. The following policy made by the government and MAHAR is in the form of an NGO that helps in application process and documentation alone as a facilitator.

PPSMS has opened space for Syrian refugees to make Malaysia a shelter. Furthermore, the benefits in PPSMS provided by the Malaysian government, namely a legal staying with proper documentation, would allow refugees to work and get a medical discount for health-care providers. These benefits provide opportunities from them to continue their studies and attract them to live in Malaysia. Such a guarantee gives hope for refugees to start a new life in this prosperous country. Unfortunately, interviews and observations conducted with the Syrian migrants found a loophole in PPSMS in card management. Accordingly, before implementing PPSMS, the government should provide a complete policy first discussed and agreed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Police, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education to avoid overlapping which would hurt Syrian migrants. If PPSMS secretariat fails to manage well, it would have a destructive impact on Syrian migrants and tarnish Malaysia's image internationally. The UN and foreign countries will regard Malaysia as merely wanting to look great by bringing Syrian refugees to Malaysia, but it is purposely done to fulfil the promise alone.

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