

FOREIGN WORKERS

The Law And Practice In Malaysia

*Ashgar Ali Ali Mohamed
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17.1 | INTRODUCTION

Islam lays special emphasis on work. Engaging in lawful employment is worthy of religious merits and has been equated to *ibadah* (worship or divine service) just as much as praying. *Ibadah* or worship is not merely confined to saying prayers in love and fear of Allah (s.w.t.), being patient with Allah's judgments, having trust in Allah (s.w.t.), believing in His Prophets, giving charity, fasting, pilgrimage or recitation of Qur'an, amongst others. In fact, it covers a much wider concept. This includes seeking gainful employment in pursuit of a legitimate livelihood for oneself and the family. Allah (s.w.t.) has ordained men to seek and engage in work. The Qur'an says:

When the prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah: and celebrate the praises of Allah often (and without stint) that ye may prosper.¹

It is He who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse ye through its tracts and enjoy the sustenance which he furnishes; but unto Him is the resurrection.²

The Qur'an further states 'that man can have nothing but what he strives for.'³

Therefore, apart from being consistent in the acts of worship, a Muslim must work hard to make a living, a duty which is a praiseworthy act of worship. Many Prophets had worked to earn their livelihood, for example

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1 *Surah Al-Jumu'ah* (62): verse 10.

2 *Surah al-Mulk* (67): verse 15.

3 *Surah Al-Najm* (53): verse 39.