

Private colleges abide by ruling on foreign students

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Private colleges generally agree with the Government's move to temporarily halt the intake of foreign students from five countries affected by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Malaysian Association of Private Colleges executive secretary Ko Kim Hooi said the 42 private institutions under its wing would follow the new ruling.

"For now, we have to put business aside and think of national security, that's why we have totally stopped the intake of students from affected countries," he said. Among

private institutions affected are Sunway, Inti, Nilai and KBU International College.

Acknowledging concern among the colleges about possible loss in revenue, he said they might enrol more local students should the ban on visas for foreign students continue indefinitely.

The Government had temporarily stopped issuing visas recently for social visits to people from China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Canada and Hong Kong.

Malaysia has 11,058 students from China, 497 from Taiwan, 337 from Vietnam, 146 from Canada

and 35 from Hong Kong.

Students from Singapore number 1,296.

Sunway College, whose latest term began in January, has prohibited students and staff from the affected countries to return home during the coming semester break.

With an international student population of 1,700, principal Elizabeth Lee said the college was monitoring the situation very closely.

Students from China (442) are among the largest group of students in the college.

Students have been urged to

keep the college authorities informed of anyone who has contracted the syndrome. This is to ensure suspected cases can be identified and referred immediately for medical assistance.

Notices detailing explicitly about the symptoms of SARS have also been circulated to all staff and students to make them aware of the symptoms.

All international students and staff were required to complete a health declaration form to enable the college to seek appropriate medical assistance when required, she added.