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Đông Tháp Province's border guards ask for information of Vietnamese citizens who have been caught illegally entering Viet Nam from Cambodia. — VNA/VNS Photo Phú Quý

HÀ NỘI — Spokesperson for the foreign ministry Lê Thu Hằng acknowledged that there “have been certain changes in Viet Nam's immigration policies” in recent times due to COVID-19 developments.

She made the statement in response to media questions over reports of many foreigners leaving Viet Nam in what has been described by some as an ‘exodus’ due to a crackdown on illegal immigration.

The spokesperson did not point to a specific policy but in early May, well into the fourth wave of infections in Viet Nam, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs issued telling local governments to tighten control over foreign labourers working in Viet Nam, including the measure of “deporting foreign workers without work permits or those failing to comply with entry and exit rules applicable to foreigners in Viet Nam”.

The move was in line with the complex developments of COVID-19 in the country and to stop illegal foreigners entering Viet Nam for jobs in a way that is not in line with the law.

Hàng added: “Việt Nam’s consistent position – as reflected in the situation on the ground – is that the authorities have been providing optimal conditions to foreign labourers in Việt Nam and have always been striving to ensure the security and safety of foreigners residing, working and studying in our country.” — VNS

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