

3 JAN 1996

Flexihours

AMENDMENTS TO EMPLOYMENT ACT FOR FLEXI WORKING HOURS THIS YEAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 3 (Bernama) -- Amendments to the Employment Act 1955 to provide for flexi working hours that will encourage an estimated one million housewives and retirees to work part or full time will be tabled in Parliament in the middle of the year.

Disclosing this here today, Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek said the Attorney General's Chambers had approved the draft of the bill and returned it to the ministry recently for minor re-adjustment before it was forwarded to the Cabinet.

With the amendments, employers can hire workers on flexible hours in accordance with their needs and the availability of workers, Lim told reporters attending the weekly Cabinet meeting.

He said the government was encouraging the private sector to employ pensioners based on their experience in various fields.

The amendments were prompted by the tight labour situation in the country which had led to an influx of foreign workers.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said in his New Year message that there were 1.2 million foreign workers in Malaysia and the figure would reach 2.3 million by the year 2000.

Among the measures he outlined to ease the dependence on foreign workers was to get retirees to continue working.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob said yesterday that foreign wives of Malaysians would also be allowed to work.

Meanwhile, the Public Services Department is finalising its study of Cuepacs' proposed salary increment based on the RM2 billion offered by the government.

Lim said he briefed the Cabinet on the matter and the government hoped that the 848,000 civil servants could enjoy the new salaries before the coming Chinese New Year and Hari Raya Aidilfitri. -- BERNAMA