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Mahathir-Salary

ESTATE WORKERS TURN TO DR M TO RESOLVE MONTHLY SALARY DISPUTE

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 Jan (Bernama) -- The Estate Workers' Support Committee today appealed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to intervene to resolve the protracted monthly pay dispute for plantation workers.

Its spokesman S. Arutchelvan also called on Dr Mahathir to enact laws to ensure employers paid monthly salary for estate workers.

The committee, which he claimed represented workers from 200 estates in Peninsular Malaysia except Terengganu, also wished to meet Dr Mahathir to discuss the issue,

The committee had lost confidence with the National Union of Plantation Workers (Nupw) and the Human Resources Ministry over the monthly wage dispute and wanted Dr Mahathir to intervene, he told a media conference, here.

A vast majority of estate workers were disappointed with the recent collective agreement signed between Nupw and the Malaysian Agricultural Producers' Association (Mapa) which gave a pay rise of RM1.10 a day, he said.

Equating the RM1.10 salary hike to the present price of a coconut, he described the CA as a betrayal of the estate workers' interests.

Arutchelvan said although under the CA, the workers daily wages rose to RM11.50, their actual salary for a day was only RM3.30 after taking into account the current consumer price index.

The new CA also did not fulfil the estate workers' demand to be paid monthly pay with a fair and just salary scheme, he said.

He said Nupw and Mapa representatives who signed the CA often quoted percentage figures when announcing salary hikes to confuse the workers.

"When the workers compare their RM1.10 salary hike with the increase in cocconut and chicken prices, they realise that the agreed upon salary rise was a big betrayal to their interests," he added.

-- BERNAMA

AFY TS