

21/06/2000

Five-day week will increase consumer spending, output

Timor Mitsu

I AM a Japanese businessman who really admires Malaysia for its development and the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

All these have attracted my companies to invest here. Malaysia is far more developed than most developing countries.

The strong economic growth shows Malaysia is on the right track.

The Government's decision to give two Saturdays off every month for the public sector will further boost the economy.

This is because the number of working days and off days is directly related to economic growth (consumer spending) and the performance of the employees (motivation).

This is why a lot of countries, especially the fully developed countries like Japan, prefer a five-day week.

One of the factors determining economic growth is consumerspending. Higher consumer spending means higher economic growth.

Since working people have the greatest purchasing power, they should be encouraged to spend more by giving them more opportunities and time to spend their hard-earned money.

Totally abolishing working on Saturdays will definitely increase consumer spending on Saturday morning and the night before.

Although the Malaysian Government has made the right move, it is still not enough to further boost consumer spending for higher economic growth, unless all the private companies give full support for a five-day week.

I heard some local private companies still have a 5 1/2-day week, a system that lowers workers' performance and motivation.

Since the private sector has more workers than the public sector, all the private sector companies, especially local ones, should fully observe a five-day week ahead of the public sector.

Two full days off will allow for much higher consumer spending than 1 1/2 days off.

Imagine the increase in the amount of consumer spending if all private companies observed a five-day week.

It benefits the economy and all businesses.

Companies lose nothing but gain everything by having a five-day week.

Besides economic growth, a five-day week also boosts worker performance.

One main reason why Japanese companies prefer a five-day week is because two full days off from work are good for workers' motivation. This is why Japanese workers always look energetic.

The excitement of having two full days off on weekends motivate them to perform better.

Companies must choose quality (five-day week) and not quantity (5 1/2-day week) for greater results.

Malaysia is developing very well but the private companies can make it better if all of them stand united by choosing a five-day week. You all can because Malaysia Boleh.

I can't wait to inform my fellow directors of all the great investment opportunities in Malaysia.

I will visit Malaysia again very soon and I hope on my next visit, I will hear about more private companies adopting a five-day week.

Arigato and sayonara.