

03 JUNE 2000

T.Kemang-Fong

MONTHLY WAGES WILL HOPEFULLY BE IMPLEMENTED THIS YEAR - FONG

PORT DICKSON, June 3 (Bernama) -- The years of struggle for monthly wages may finally be over for plantation workers.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Fong Chan Onn said today it could be implemented this year.

"Hopefully this year, as soon as possible," he told reporters here after attending a function organised by the Old Boys Association of Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Chung Pin Pasir Panjang.

Most of the country's 300,000 plantation workers have all these years been treated as daily rated workers.

Dr Fong said the government was not delaying the implementation of the monthly wage scheme for estate workers.

Yesterday representatives of the Estate Society Support Committee lodged a police report over alleged delay by the Human Resources Ministry in implementing the scheme.

Dr Fong also denied that the the government had agreed in principle to implement the monthly wage scheme merely to win votes in the June 10 by-election in Teluk Kemang.

Last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Cabinet had agreed in principle to introduce monthly wages which had been fought for by estate workers for 50 years.

According to Dr Fong, the government felt the time had come to acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices of estate workers.

He said the ministry was awaiting the outcome of a study on the monthly wage scheme by a team of experts from Universiti Malaya.

He said it was expected to be released later this month and would then be presented to the Cabinet.

"After that, we will discuss with the employers on how to implement it," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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