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Samy-Estate

SAMY VELLU HAILS AGREEMENT ON MONTHLY SALARY FOR PLANTATION WORKERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 8 (Bernama) -- MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu has welcomed the decision to pay a monthly salary of at least RM325 for plantation workers, saying it is long overdue.

"It is a step in the right direction towards obtaining minimum monthly wage for workers in the entire estate sector, including for rubber tappers," the Works Minister said when commenting on the collective agreement between the Malayan Agricultural Producers Association (Mapa) and the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW) yesterday.

Under the agreement, a total of 45,000 plantation workers in 450 oil palm estates nationwide will enjoy the monthly salary.

Yesterday, Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn who announced the agreement, concluded after over a year of negotiations, said the monthly salary payment which also applies to oil palm mill workers, would be enforced from Jan 1, this year until 2003.

Dr Fong said both parties agreed that the minimum income each month would be RM325 as a safety net on conditions that the workers come to work each day and carry out the work as directed.

Samy Vellu congratulated the NUPW for its patience in achieving their struggle.

The minister said the MIC, which has been in the forefront of this struggle, has also been fighting for a monthly salary for plantation workers.

"The struggle has been going on for more than two decades," he said.

Samy Vellu thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the government for taking a serious view of the plight of the estate workers.

He also thanked Dr Fong for taking action on the matter in bringing Mapa and NUPW to the negotiating table.

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