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SMI-Safety

SMI URGED TO UPGRADE SAFETY FOLLOWING TAX REDUCTION

IPOH, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Operators of small and medium industries (SMI's) have been urged to raise the level of safety and health at the work place following the reduction in corporate tax.

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said the reduction of the corporate tax from 28 to 20 per cent enabled SMI operators to save much money which should have been spent on paying tax.

Thus, it was appropriate that some of the savings be utilised to raise the level of safety and health for their workers including buying equipment that could reduce accidents, he said.

"We have obtained RM778,455 assistance from the SMI Development Corporation (SMIDEC) to organise programmes that could help SMIs to save cost in efforts to raise the level of safety and health for workers," he told reporters after opening the Workers' Safety and Health Course for SMIs, here today.

When tabling the 2003 Budget recently, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the reduction of corporate tax for SMIs with paid-up capital of less than RM2.5 million from 28 per cent to 20 per cent.

Lee said that SMIs could save at least RM8,000 per year on the average from the tax reduction and they should invest the money saved for the welfare of their workers.

"Based on statistics, 80 per cent of accidents at the work place occurred among the SMIs. This shows that the level of safety and health at the SMIs is still unsatisfactory and should be raised in the interest of the workers' safety and productivity," he said.

NIOSH Executive Director Ir Abu Bakar Che Man said on the whole the number of accidents at work places among the SMIs had reduced but much still had to be done to overcome the problems of accidents at work places.

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