

## **Rafizi: BN's vow of 3.3 million new jobs not realistic**

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**By Ram Anand**

BN's promise to create 3.3 million new jobs if given a mandate in the next general election is "not realistic", given the coalition's past record in creating new jobs.

PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli (right in photo) said that, according to figures from the Economic Planning Unit, the government had only created 300,000 jobs a year on average for the last four years under Najib Abdul Razak's tenure as premier.

"To meet this target of creating 3.3 million new jobs, the new government would have to create an average of 650,000 new jobs a year, which is more than double," he told a press conference at PKR headquarters today.

Rafizi also said that, while promising to create new jobs by bringing in RM1.3 trillion in investments, the BN has not spelt out how it would reduce the nation's dependency on foreign workers.

"He also did not say how many of these new jobs will held by locals, " he added.

Rafizi said Najib should provide a clear mechanism as to how he expects to create 3.3 million new jobs with investments.

The BN's pledge on job creation significantly ups Pakatan Rakyat's promise to create 1 million job opportunities by phasing out the foreign workforce.

Rafizi argued that Pakatan's mechanism is much clearer, even though most of the 1 million new jobs will fall under the skilled labour category.

"We plan to phase out the foreign workforce by providing technical training for the three million individuals who leave school after SPM annually," he said.

There is a gap between demand for local workers for low-skilled jobs and the supply of workers to match it, he said, but Pakatan's minimum wage policy of RM1,100 a month will help bridge this.

"We will train school leavers, and we will make it attractive for them to go for such low-skilled jobs," he said.

Subsidy for minimum wage

Rafizi also said that a Pakatan-led federal government will subsidise the cost of salaries for small- and medium-scale enterprises as these transit toward implementing the minimum

wage policy.

"They will be able to go to the Labour Department and apply for a two-year subsidy.

"In the meantime, we will encourage new businesses to find ways to automate their operations to reduce dependency on low-cost labour."

Pakatan will not impose a levy or immediately bar foreign workers from entering Malaysia because it will "jam the industry".

"It will halt economic growth. We need to solve problems relating to the salary appeal and provide adequate training for the local workforce," Rafizi added.

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