

Zahid: Restructured foreign workers' levies to bring RM2.5b
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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the government's decision to restructure the levy rate system for foreign workers into two categories is expected to bring an extra income of RM2.5 billion to the country.

He said today in Sibu the new rate would come into effect from tomorrow.

He said this at a media conference after visiting the University College of Technology Sarawak (UCTS), the only university in central Sarawak during his two-day working visit to the town which ended today.

Previously, he said the foreign workers were charged different rates which were based on the sectors where they worked such as manufacturing, construction, service, plantation and agriculture.

"Now there are only two categories. The first is for those in the manufacturing, construction and services sector. Here each worker will be charged the new rate of RM2,500.

"For those in the plantation and agriculture which come under the second category, the rate is RM1,500 per worker," he said.

Zahid said domestic workers were however exempted.

According to statistics, he said there were now some 2.135 million registered foreign workers in the country.

"Our Prime Minister Najib Razak had in his 2016 national recalibrated budget speech touched on this restructuring.

"This is in accordance with the development in the country's economic scenario and that at international level," he said.

He said the government needed to come up with the new rates as the foreign workers were also enjoying various benefits such as subsidised prices for food and other necessities which were only meant for the country's citizens.

"They are enjoying our good infrastructure too but we are also acknowledging the vital roles they play in our nation-building and to our economy," he added.

- Bernama

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