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| Newspaper | NEW STRAITS TIMES |
| Date      | 2 MAY 2015        |

PRIME NEWS

# PM's goodies for workers' welfare

NST  
- 2/5/2015



Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** during the national-level Workers Day celebration at the **Borneo Convention Centre Kuching** yesterday. Pic by Nadim Bokhari

**WORKERS DAY CHEER:** Announces expanded compassionate leave terms for civil sector

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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday unveiled Workers Day goodies for workers in the form of expanded leeway for the three-day compassionate leave for civil servants, as well as the continuation of the free health screening programme for private sector employees.

He also proposed that the Social Security Organisation (Socso) ex-

pand its protection coverage for private sector workers regardless of the maximum salary, and for workers' insurance coverage ceiling to be raised from RM3,000 to RM4,000.

The announcements were made in conjunction with the national-level Workers Day celebration at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching here.

Addressing a crowd of 10,000 people, Najib said the compassionate leave for civil servants to attend to the death of an immediate family member, including spouses, children and biological parents,

had been extended to include parents-in-law, adoptive parents and legally adopted children. He said the terms, effective July 1, were part of the government's initiative to improve unrecorded leave implementation for employees.

He said the government had also decided that Socso would continue its free health screening programme for private sector employees aged 40 and above by providing a mobile service so that the screening could be conducted on employers' premises.

Presently, Socso's social security scheme coverage is limited to those who earn RM3,000 and below. The proposal is expected to benefit an additional 500,000 workers, bringing the total to 6.5 million workers

covered under the scheme. All employees in the private sector will automatically be eligible for the coverage benefit.

"We will continue to provide more to look after the welfare of the country's workforce," said Najib.

Present were Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem, Human Resources Minister Datuk Richard Riot, Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) president Mohd Khalid Atan, Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs) president Datuk Azih Muda, and federal and state cabinet ministers.

Najib described the celebration as historic, as it was the first time such an event was held in the state, with the participation of MTUC

and Cuepacs.

In his welcome speech, Riot said the government had always prioritised government and private sector workers' welfare and social support. He said the government also strove to ensure that the safety and health of employers at the workplace were taken care of.

At the event, Najib presented Workers Day awards to 17 recipients, including 52-year-old teacher Anuar Mansor, who was awarded the Tokoh Pekerja Negara 2015 under the disabled group category.

Despite being hearing impaired since childhood, Anuar, who teaches at SMK Temerloh Jaya in Temerloh, Pahang, said he never gave up on his dream to become a teacher. **Additional reporting by Esther Landau**