

PM: GOVT REVIEWING MINIMUM WAGE

This is to ensure it remains relevant to current socio-economic situation, says Muhyiddin

HANA NAZ HARUN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

THE government is reviewing the 2020 Minimum Wage Order to ensure that it remains relevant to the current socio-economic situation.

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the government was concerned about the minimum wage and admitted that despite assistance programmes, there were still workers hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The government is always concerned about the minimum wage issue and will work to ensure that it remains relevant to the current socio-economic situation.

"I hope and urge all parties who wish to voice their opinions and suggestions on this matter to take part (in the review) through the platform provided," he said in a televised address in conjunction with Workers Day yesterday.

He said the government was improving and amending the Employment Act 1955, expanding its scope of application to all

employees in the private sector regardless of salary limits.

This will include extending the maternity leave to 90 days and granting a three-day paternity leave, improving work-life balance through a cut in weekly working hours from 48 hours to 45, apart from introducing flexible work arrangements.

Muhyiddin said these measures were among the three main strategies of the government to ease the people's burden and assist employees, particularly in dealing with difficulties due to the outbreak.

He said another strategy was to ensure employees could remain employed and maintain a source of income through RM800 million worth of initiatives that would benefit workers and employers.

"Initiatives, such as more targeted job placements, skills upgrading and retraining programmes including digitalisation, as well as the creation of an easily accessible online training platform, have benefited various parties."

He said these initiatives included the Wage Subsidy Programme, Employment Retention Programme, PenjanaKerjaya under the Social Security Organisation and the HRDF (Human Resources Development Fund) Penjana initiative.

"The government continues to work to improve workers' skills by making them marketable for future employment.

"Although many training insti-



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin delivering a televised address in conjunction with Workers Day yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

tutions had to close down due to the Movement Control Order, online teaching and learning sessions continued, modular and micro-credential training programmes expanded."

The e-Latih digital learning hub would enable Malaysians to gain access to more than 300 skills development training mod-

ules for free based on the needs of industries, said Muhyiddin.

He said the government would introduce the Skills Training Variable Loan Policy Programme for the Malaysian Advanced Skills Diploma through the Skills Development Fund Corporation.

He added that the programme would create more skilled workers and reduce the nation's dependence on foreign workers.

"The third strategy is to focus on creating jobs.

"In this aspect, the government has formed the National Employment Council to realise the strategy of creating and retaining employment in line with the 2021 Budget's first goal of improving the people's wellbeing.

"Through it, the government's intention to revive and stimulate the economy can be implemented with a comprehensive approach, guided by data and in line with current industry demands, while taking into account factors, such as people's wellbeing and economic resilience."

The government has taken measures to ensure Malaysians have a wide range of employment opportunities.

These include providing job-matching services through the national employment portal, MyFutureJobs, the Upskill Malaysia one-stop centre, HRDF Placement Centre and targeted em-

ployment carnivals.

Muhyiddin said the Short-Term Employment Programme saw applicants placed in ministries, government agencies and government-linked companies (GLC) on a contractual basis.

Up to April 16, 30,377 people had managed to get jobs through this programme.

He said 27,503 were placed in the public sector, and 2,874 in GLCs and their strategic partners.

"This initiative aims to reduce unemployment, especially among graduates and the youth."

Muhyiddin said he was confident that the people, especially workers, would remain resilient and work to strengthen each other in contributing to the country's economic recovery.

"The role that all of you play as strategic partners in developing the economy is very important and appreciated by the government.

"Let us continue to work together for a safe and prosperous future for Malaysia."

"Lastly, I would like to express my highest gratitude and wish Happy Labour Day to all private and public sector workers, and all trade union leaders and members, and the leadership of the Congress of Unions and Employees in the Public and Civil Services and the Malaysian Trades Union Congress."

Workers assembling ball bearings at a factory in Nilai. The government is implementing three strategies to ease the people's burden and assist employees, particularly in dealing with difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. FILE PIC

