

Minimum wage being reviewed

PM: We will prioritise workers' protection so that no one is left behind

By ZAKIAH KOYA
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: The minimum wage for workers will be reviewed and the government has called for all stakeholders to give their proposals.

In his Labour Day address yesterday, Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said while many were still trying to maintain their livelihoods during the Covid-19 pandemic and economic slowdown, the government would prioritise the protection of all workers to ensure that no one was left behind.

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

"For this, a review of the Minimum Wage 2020 Order is being conducted.

"I hope and urge all parties who want to have their say or make proposals to take part on the prepared platform," said Muhyiddin.

He added that despite the government's efforts, there were still workers who were affected and it would take a longer time for them to



Important announcement: Muhyiddin delivering his Labour Day address which was aired on local television. - Bernama

return to the lives they once enjoyed before the pandemic struck.

"However, I believe that Malaysian workers are sustainable workers who will help each other to revive the economy," he said in a

televised speech yesterday.

In line with this year's Labour Day theme "Culturalisation of New Norms in the Global Working World", Muhyiddin said the government had tried various approaches

to improve working conditions in the country.

"We are now at the fifth stage of the 6R Strategy for Comprehensive Economic Recovery Plan, which aims to wholly revitalise the economy. To achieve this, the government has introduced a few stimulus packages to assist the people and businesses as well as to protect the economy," he said.

He said through packages such as Prihatin, Penjana, Permai and Perneraka, RM300bil had been allocated and various efforts taken to help workers maintain their jobs, while those facing unemployment were aided through the Social Welfare Organisation and the Human Resources Development Fund.

The government's economic revival plan, he said, included the three main strategies to help workers during the pandemic - maintaining and creating jobs, and protecting their rights.

"Initiatives to ensure that workers keep their jobs and income include targeted placements, upskilling and reskilling," he said, adding that among these efforts were the Wage Subsidy Programme,

Maintaining Job Programme and Penjana Kerjaya.

"Although many training institutions were forced to close during the movement control order, online teaching and learning continues using modular and micro-credentials.

"The government's digitalisation efforts, such as e-LATih, have provided free access to more than 300 skill expansion modules based on Malaysia's industrial needs," he said.

The Skill Development Fund Corporation, said Muhyiddin, would also introduce loans for diplomas for continuous upskilling in the country's efforts to lower its dependence on foreign workers.

Besides efforts in overhauling labour laws, especially on housing and workers' amenities, he said the government was working to improve such legislation and widen its scope to all workers, including looking at lowering weekly work hours for a better work-life balance.