

# REVIEW OF CIVIL SERVICE SALARY SCHEME

Cabinet to discuss it next week as it has been over a decade since last salary adjustment, says PM

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**T**HE government has agreed to review the salary scheme of civil servants with an initial discussion to be raised in the cabinet meeting next week.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the move to review the salary scheme of civil servants was made after considering that there had been no increase in their salary for a long time.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said he was taking into ac-

count the current salary scheme, which was deemed as low.

"The last review was in 2013, which was rather a long time (ago). Hence, the matter has been put forward to me by Zulkapli (Public Services Department director-general Datuk Dr Zulkapli Mohamed) and Zuki (Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali) to establish a team to study the matter, and I have agreed to it.

"We will table this to the cabinet, to get the ministers' approval, before the team can start working and provide suggestions to the government to review the salary scheme of civil servants.

"Overall, wages and salaries of the civil servants are still low and I believe (an increase) should be considered, despite the government facing existing financial constraints. I think we can give this a little consideration," Anwar said after the Amanat Perdana Menteri programme with Negri Sembilan civil servants at the Seremban City Council Hall.

He, however, did not set a spe-

ific time frame for any outcome on the matter or the percentage of increase in salary.

"The length of the discussion period will be handed over to Zulkapli, while the projection of the increase is still too early to be announced. But, (the increase) must be made,"

Earlier in a speech, Anwar said he hoped that once the country's economic situation improved, the salary scheme of civil servants would be reviewed.

"I would like to give my assurance and I believe that *insyaallah*, we can review the salary scheme of civil servants. This is because it has not been reviewed for 10 years.

"To do so, we must make sure that our government is strong, so that we can work towards this."

The Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs) supported the idea of increasing the minimum wage for workers in the B40 and M40 groups living in urban areas.

Its general secretary Abdul

Rahman Mohd Nordin said the current monthly minimum wage of RM1,500 was insufficient due to the rising cost of living.

"Nowadays, each household has different commitments compared with the 1980s, with some using Wi-Fi, Astro services and air-conditioning for comfort," he said when contacted by the *New Straits Times*.

However, he acknowledged that not all employers were able to raise their workers' wages.

"The government has its own system for raising wages, while the private sector depends on government policies.

"Small businesses, especially those unable to afford high wages, may struggle to comply, whereas corporations have the capacity to do so," he said.

Rahman also mentioned that during the Movement Control Order, many businesses faced financial difficulties and were unable to pay their workers.

Radiographer Harwani Ismail from a local hospital echoed Rahman's call for an increase in min-

imum wage, particularly for the B40 and M40 groups.

She emphasised the importance of implementing annual salary increases and progressive wages to benefit experienced, skilled and qualified workers.

As a single mother with two children, she highlighted the need to pay for essential needs at home and those earning less than RM2,000 in minimum wage often had to work multiple jobs to sustain their livelihood.

"I support the suggestion and advocate for a reevaluation of the previously established minimum wage," she said.

The Social Protection Contributors' Advisory Association Malaysia (SPCAAM) proposed an increase in the minimum wage to prevent exploitation of workers.

It suggested that Bank Negara Malaysia and the Finance Ministry collaborate to determine a living wage benchmark in urban areas, considering the varying cost of living scenarios across the country.