

PM urged to intervene in 45-hour work week stalemate

KUALA LUMPUR: A senator has called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to step in and resolve concerns over the controversial plan to implement a 45-hour workweek for healthcare workers.

Senator Lingeswaran R. Arunasalam said further plans to hold engagement sessions with stakeholders on the issue are pointless and that Anwar's intervention is needed to resolve the stalemate.

"It has been made clear that the majority of the civil healthcare workforce does not agree with this suggestion, and trying to hold further discussions is a waste of time. This should be brought to the attention of Anwar as soon as possible.

"We hope the Public Service Department and Health Ministry will reconsider this proposal for the sake of the health and well-being of healthcare workers in our country," he said at a press conference held at Parliament yesterday.

Lingeswaran, who was accompanied by representatives from other healthcare worker unions, said they would only agree to the 45-hour workweek if flexibility in shift work periods is guaranteed.

This comes following the planned 45-hour workweek for nurses, which was scheduled to come into effect on March 1, was put on hold for three months in Parliament on Feb 25.

This decision came after concerns were raised that the new 45-hour workweek directive under the Public Service Remuneration System would cause an imbalance in work-life and lead to mental health strain on healthcare workers.