

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

PM: Minimum wage may be increased from RM1,700

KOTA KINABALU: The government is prepared to consider raising the minimum wage beyond RM1,700 if the country's economic performance continues to strengthen in the near future, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said.

He said the current minimum wage of RM1,700 was insufficient to cover workers' daily expenses.

"Before we (unity government) took office, the minimum wage was RM1,200. Then we raised it to RM1,500. Last year, we increased it to RM1,700. Is that enough?"

"I don't believe it is. Once our economy is strong, I will raise the amount," he said at the PMX Townhall programme with the youth in Inanam here yesterday.

He was responding to a student who said that the minimum wage had not yet been fully implemented in Sabah.

Anwar cited examples of government-linked companies (GLCs) that ensured the welfare of their employees by setting a minimum wage of RM3,100.

"If we have full control over GLCs like Petronas (Petroliam Nasional Bhd), government-owned banks, Telekom Malaysia Bhd, and TNB (Tenaga Nasional Bhd), the minimum wage is set at RM3,100. That is the standard we want."

Anwar, who is finance minister, said certain sectors in Sabah had been given exemptions from the minimum wage increase.

He said the government was willing to reopen discussions to ensure that workers in Sabah were not left out of the minimum wage increase.