

**MTUC Sarawak Disappointed Over Lower Minimum Wage Quantum For Sarawak  
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KUCHING, May 2 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) Sarawak has welcomed the minimum wage announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for the private sector but said it was disappointed that the quantum for Sarawak was lower than the peninsular.

MTUC Sarawak chairman Mohamad Ibrahim Hamid said today the RM800 per month minimum wage set for workers in Sarawak, as recommended by the National Wages Consultative Council, was not fair as the cost of living was 15 to 25 percent higher in the state compared to the peninsula.

"While government employees have a regional allowance, private sector employees do not. Despite high economic growth and rapid development since independence, the wages of Sarawakian workers remain low," he said in a statement here.

On Monday, Najib had announced that the minimum wage for workers in Peninsular Malaysia had been set at RM900 a month or RM4.33 per hour while for Sarawak, Sabah and Labuan, the quantum is RM800 per month or RM3.85 an hour, which would take effect six months from the date the order was gazetted.

MTUC Sarawak, which strongly believed that minimum wage and higher wages led to higher economic growth and more business for companies, also reiterated calls to reduce 200,000 foreign workers in Sarawak and 3.1 million in Malaysia, said Mohamad Ibrahim.

He said figures showed that over the past two decades, the wage increase of 2.9 percent was far behind productivity increase of 4.5 percent in the state.

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