

**RM8,000 To Hire Indonesian Maids: Muhyiddin
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- The government has agreed to fix the cost of hiring Indonesian maids to RM8,000 after considering the costs incurred by both countries.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the cost was decided upon at a Cabinet Committee on Foreign Workers and Illegal Immigrants meeting here Monday.

He said fixing the cost was among those contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Indonesian Domestic Workers signed between the Malaysian and Indonesian governments in 2011, which was postponed.

"The costs involved are 200 hours of training, cost of travel documents, food and accommodation for maids before they are handed over to employers, transportation, health check and payment for employment agencies in both countries," he said.

Muhyiddin, who is also committee chairman, said this at a news conference after chairing the committee's 10th meeting in the Parliament building here Monday.

Under the MoU, payments to maid agencies were previously set at RM4,511, of which RM2,711 was paid by the employer and RM1,800 by the maid.

"Some people may say that the cost has increased from RM4,500 to RM8,000, but if the government doesn't agree to this, then we will never be able to hire Indonesian maids.

"Indonesia has made comparisons with other countries which are willing to pay more. Malaysians want maids, and therefore, we must take in factors that are out of our control as our benchmark despite high costs," said Muhyiddin.

The deputy prime minister said the change in cost structure would be brought for negotiations between both governments so that it could be implemented quickly.

He said the details would be announced by the human resources ministry after a consensus was reached.

Besides that, Muhyiddin said the committee also decided that the Minimum Wage Order 2012 not be used for foreign workers holding the Temporary Work Visit Pass.

"We will not worry about minimum wage. Employers can determine minimum age, according to market rate," he said.

Commenting further, Muhyiddin said the government also decided to abolish the Journey Perform Visa (JP Visa), beginning Oct 1, this year.

Previously, the JP Visa was issued to Indonesians entering the country using social visit pass as tourists to obtain work in Malaysia.

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