



PEKERJA PENENTU ARAHTUJU NEGARA

MTUC mengucapkan selamat berpuasa kepada semua umat Islam

Kursus MTUC:

MTUC/ILO National Workshop for the Ratification of C87 and Full implementation of C98:

- ◆ 1-2nd July Ixora Hotel Prai Penang and
- ◆ 4-5th July Tropical Inn Johor Bahru.



Labour Bulletin

Mahkamah memutuskan bahawa Abdul Halim kekal Setiausaha MTUC

SHAH ALAM, 30 Mei - Mahkamah Tinggi Shah Alam hari ini memutuskan penyingkiran Abdul Halim Mansor sebagai Setiausaha Agung Kongres Kesatuan Sekerja Malaysia (MTUC) adalah tidak sah dan terbatal.

Hakim Hadhariah Syed Ismail membuat keputusan itu di dalam kamar, selepas mendengar hujah kedua-dua pihak iaitu peguam D. Kalai yang mewakili Abdul Halim selaku plaintif dan peguam P. Mithran mewakili defendan, Presiden MTUC Mohd Khalid Atan.

Kalai memberitahu wartawan bahawa Hadhariah juga memutuskan plaintif masih lagi Setiausaha Agung MTUC sehingga pengundian jawatan sama diadakan dalam Mesyuarat Perwakilan kongres itu yang dibuat setiap tiga tahun.

Abdul Halim dilantik selaku setiausaha agung MTUC oleh Majlis Am pertubuhan itu pada 3 Mac lepas. Kalai juga berkata dengan keputusan itu, pelantikan N. Gopal Krishnan sebagai Setiausaha Agung menggantikan Abdul Halim adalah tidak sah dan terbatal.

Katanya mahkamah juga membenarkan deklarasi yang dipohon Abdul Halim bahawa beliau berhak menjalankan semula tugasnya di MTUC sebagai Setiausaha Agung berdasarkan Perkara 10 (4) dan 10 (5) Perlembagaan MTUC.

Kalai berkata Abdul Halim disingkirkan daripada jawatan itu mengikut Perkara 10 (5) Perlembagaan MTUC iaitu tempoh pelantikan jawatan itu hanyalah untuk dua tahun.

Bagaimanapun beliau berkata mengikut Perkara 10 (4) Perlembagaan pertubuhan itu seorang Setiausaha Agung dipilih menerusi Persidangan Perwakilan MTUC setiap tiga tahun.

"Kita (plaintif) mentafsirkan tempoh jawatan tersebut adalah bagi tempoh tiga tahun, selepas mahkamah mengkaji pindaan perlembagaan MTUC, mahkamah bersetuju tempoh jawatan itu harus tiga tahun dan tempoh dua tahun adalah ralat dalam perkara 10(5) Perlembagaan MTUC," katanya. *Sumber : Bernama*

Abdul Halim Mansor, Setiausaha Agung



PERLAKSANAAN GAJI MINIMA

400 big companies to delay minimum wage

More than 400 big companies have received the green light to postpone the implementation of minimum wage of RM900 a month until Dec 31.

Human Resource Minister Datuk Richard Riot said the postponement was made due to various reasons, including the financial capability of the companies to implement the minimum wage, announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak previously.

"Overall, all the private sector agreed and did not protest against the decision of the government to implement minimum wage but they asked for flexibility due to certain reasons.

"To date, we have received 400 applications from companies seeking for the date to be pushed to Dec 31 and I have approved the applications," he told reporters after the 2013 Workers' Day gathering at the Bukit Jalil Stadium today launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. The announcement of the RM900 monthly minimum wage for the private sector for the peninsula and RM800 a month in Sabah, Sarawak and Labuan was made by the Prime Minister on April 30 last year and gazetted on July 16.

The Minimum Wage Order 2012 was enforced on Jan 1, 2013 and the rate would be studied every two years.

Meanwhile, Riot said the National Wages Consultative Council would hold a meeting with employers from micro companies to discuss on the implementation of minimum wage on July 25.

He said, to date, the ministry had yet to receive any application for the postponement of minimum wage from micro companies but employers would have an opportunity to do so at the meeting.

In his speech, Riot said 2012 witnessed the national economy managing to weather the impact of the global economic crisis. He said the success was due to agreement and consensus to ensure the national development agenda could be continued and inherited by the coming generation. *Bernama, June 22, 2013.*

Errant employers told to shift business elsewhere

KUCHING : The Sarawak Division of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) said that any employer who refuse to comply with the National Minimum Wage policy by January next year should consider moving elsewhere outside the country.

"Any employer who cannot comply should close shop and move to North Korea, Zimbabwe or Bangladesh," its secretary Andrew Lo said when commenting on a statement by Human Resources Minister Datuk Richard Riot that the policy would be fully implemented by Jan 1 next year and that employers have until Dec 31 to give their acceptance.

He said that the ministry should not entertain any more requests from the employers for further extension of the policy. "(The minister should) give me half good reason (for any more extension). "The minister should migrate to Timbuktu if there is any more extension. You can quote me on that," he said in a text message.

Datuk Riot told reporters that some 400 companies nationwide had yet to comply with the policy.

He said that the government's decision to fully implement the policy was on a decision by the National Wages Consultative Council after vetting requests from the employers.

The policy requires that employers pay the minimum wage of RM800 in Sarawak and Sabah and RM900 in Peninsular Malaysia for their workers.

According to Riot, the council had given the 400 companies until Dec 31 this year to comply, saying that the government would not entertain any more request for further extension.

The policy was implemented on Jan 1 this year, but many companies have asked for time to comply, citing various reasons, mainly involving foreign workers.

The implementation of the policy followed the Minimum Wage Order gazetted on July 16, 2012.

Source: thesundaily, 30 June 2013



Permanent govt employees should be made eligible to contribute to Socso'

GEORGE TOWN, Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs) hopes that the government will consider and accept its proposal to make permanent civil servants eligible to contribute to the Social Security Organisation (Socso).

Cuepacs president Datuk Omar Osman said the proposal, which was made after a series of surveys, would be submitted to the Public Service Department for further discussions.

"Last May, civil servants employed on temporary or contract basis have been made eligible to contribute to Socso and it is indeed a good development and we hope it can be extended to those with permanent status earning RM7,000 or less per month.

"The scheme offered by Socso is much better compared with the ex-gratia scheme to protect the welfare of civil servants and their families should anything happens to them while in service," he told reporters after opening the Penang Cuepacs delegates meeting. Meanwhile, Omar also expressed hope that Cuepacs members, who have been appointed as members of the Consumer Squad under the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry, could become the eyes and ears to the government in monitoring the price of consumer products in view of the upcoming Ramadan and Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

He said this was vital to ensure that traders would not raise the price of consumer products at their whim and fancy following the special salary movement to be enjoyed by civil servants effective July 1.

"They should report immediately to the ministry should they find any consumer products that are being sold at an unreasonable prices," he said.

In another development, Omar also repeated his call to the government to consider increasing the housing allowance to RM450, standardising the cost of living allowance and allowing the civil servants to withdraw 20 per cent of the gratuity at the age of 50 in the 2014 Budget. *Bernama, Jun 19/Borneo News 20 June*

Govt agencies should build more day care centres'

KUALA LUMPUR: Day care centres or nurseries at the workplace in government agencies should be expanded to ensure that the productivity of public servants, especially women, is at its best, said the prime minister's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

She said the expansion of day care centres would ensure that parents could focus fully on their work rather than trying to balance other worries, such as the welfare of their families and children.

"The focus on work, especially for women, is often disturbed when there are issues related to family and young children, like having to leave their child with a maid or when the child is unwell.

"This will affect their performance and productivity," said Rosmah, who is also the patron of the Wives of Civil Servants and Women Civil Servants Association (Puspanita).

"Childcare centres at the workplace will help to reduce the negative impact and, at the same time, help cut travelling time and babysitter costs."

Rosmah said the Social Welfare Department statistics showed that out of 400 government agencies, only 90 have day care centres or workplace nurseries nationwide.

"The matter should not be taken lightly. More agencies should adopt the initiative," Rosmah said at the opening of Puspanita's strategic framework and action plan for transformation at its annual conference..

Rosmah also touched on the need to improve women empowerment and suggested that a "mentor-mentee" system be introduced at all government agencies to reduce the generation gap between experienced civil servants and those new to the job.

"Young women need to be empowered. They need guidance so that their real talents can emerge.

"The 'mentor-mentee' system will be a good platform for young women to develop their skill and, at the same time, contribute new and innovative strategies".

Rosmah said Puspanita must play a more proactive role by organising seminars, training and establishing collaboration with various agencies, including those in the private sector, to continue improving the working women's role in the country.

She said these programmes must combine soft skills, such as effective communications, tolerance and the ability to adapt with their knowledge and technical skills.

Sources: NST, 4th June 2013



Aktiviti Bahagian Perak



Sama-sama memantapkan ilmu ahli di tempat kerja

Kuala Gula, 10-11hb Jun 2013-Bertempat di muara Sungai dianjurkan buat pertama kalinya oleh MTUC bahagian Perak Kursus tiga hari dua malam, Kesedaran Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan 2013.

Kursus yang berjaya menarik minat wakil-wakil dari setiap gabungan di MTUC bahagian Perak telah disertai 30 orang peserta dari ahli-ahli gabungan yang bernaung di bawah MTUC bahagian Perak.

Ternyata sambutan yang amat menggalakkan ini menggambarkan bahawa MTUC bahagian Perak semakin mantap bagi menyampaikan maklumat kepada akar umbi bahawa kesedaran keselamatan dan kesihatan di tempat kerja amat penting bagi kesinambungan pekerjaan supaya matlamat untuk mengu-

rangkan kemalangan di tempat kerja dapat dicapai.

Pihak MTUC bahagian Perak telah menjemput pakar dan ahli profesional untuk mengendalikan kursus yang julung kalinya diadakan di Kuala Gula ini. Antara jemputan yang hadir adalah Saudara Balakrishnan dari Pulau Pinang, Puan Julia dari Jabatan Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Perak (JKKP @ DOSH), Saudara Syukri dari Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial (PERKESO) sebagai penyumbang dana

kursus serta Jabatan Keselamatan Jalan Raya (JKJR) Perak, Puan Wan.

Pelbagai persoalan telah diperbincangkan secara panjang lebar oleh semua peserta.

Dalam masa yang sama peserta-peserta juga dapat menikmati keindahan panorama sekeliling kawasan Resort ini yang kaya dengan sumber alam dan kehijauannya di samping masakan istimewa Restoran Cendrawasih yang telah menyajikan dengan menu-menu tradisional.

Objektif pengajuran kursus ini telah mencapai sasarannya untuk memberikan pengetahuan dan kesedaran kepada peserta kursus supaya bahan yang disampaikan di sini boleh dikongsi kepada rakan-rakan ditempat kerja masing-masing

Dilaporkan oleh :

Sdra. Hasmarul Rizal, Setiausaha MTUC bahagian Perak

Kursus Pengurusan dan Kewangan Kesatuan



MTUC/SC, Kursus Pengurusan dan Kewangan Kesatuan Sekerja telah diadakan pada 17-21 Jun 2013 di MTUC Subang Jaya Selangor. Seramai 6 peserta wanita daripada 19 peserta telah menyertai kursus ini. Kursus lima hari ini telah memberi pendedahan kepada tajuk-tajuk pengurusan kewangan, meningkatkan kedudukan kewangan kesatuan, penyelenggaraan dan pengawalan prosedur perakaunan kesatuan dan sebagainya.

Sambutan Hari Pekerja 2013 KSM

Perhimpunan Hari Pekerja 2013 telah diadakan di Stadium Putra Bukit Jalil baru-baru ini. Sambutan yang diadakan secara gilang gemilang ini adalah anjuran Kementerian yang pada asalnya telah ditangguhkan sambutan ini berikutan Pilihanraya Umum ke -13.

Lebih 12,000 pekerja mewakili pelbagai kesatuan sekerja, persatuan majikan, jabatan dan agensi kerajaan serta sektor swasta menghadiri majlis itu. Ucapan utama telah disampaikan oleh Menteri Sumber Manusia baru Datuk Richard Riot Anak Jaem.

Sambutan hari pekerja telah diadakan sejak tahun 1991 walaupun pengiktirafan telah diberikan sejak tahun 1973 bagi menghargai perjuangan dan sumbangan para pekerja dalam pembangunan Negara di samping mengukuhkan lagi sumbangan para pekerja dalam memartabatkan Negara di persada antarabangsa.

Tahun ini tema yang dipilih ialah **'Pekerja Pemangkin Transformasi Negara'** memandangkan warga kerja adalah tulang belakang kepada segala pencapaian pembangunan dan kemajuan Negara.

"Pengiktirafan ini harus diberikan kepada pekerja kerana mereka merupakan penggerak bagi memastikan segala usaha dan perancangan Kerajaan melalui agenda-agenda transformasi Negara dapat direalisasikan kata Perdana Menteri".

Perdana Menteri dalam ucapannya telah menjawab beberapa persoalan berkaitan dengan pelaksanaan gaji minima RM900. Beliau menjelaskan bahawa sebanyak 400 syarikat telah memohon untuk dilanjutkan sehingga ke akhir tahun dan telah diluluskan.



Presiden MTUC, Mohd Khalid Atan menyertai sambutan Hari Pekerja di Bukit Jalil, bersama Perdana Menteri anjuran Kementerian.

Di samping itu, permohonan kepada syarikat-syarikat mikro atau kecil telah dibuka bagi membolehkan mereka juga melanjutkan tarikh pelaksanaan gaji minima.

Pada majlis itu, Perdana Menteri, Dato' Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak telah menyampaikan anugerah kepada tokoh pekerja pelbagai kategori yang terdiri daripada Pengerus Besar Era Edar Marketing Sdn Bhd Hamsiah Ismail dinobatkan sebagai tokoh pekerja negara kategori eksekutif, kerani Hong Leong Bank Berhad Mohamed Dauzkaply Nor Ghazali (bukan eksekutif) dan Pegawai Penyelidik Sosial Abdul Rais Mohamad Mokhtar (orang kelainan upaya).

Pelbagai persembahan seperti tarian dan persembahan gamelan, koir dan nyanyian juga telah diadakan. Dalam majlis ini semua peserta telah diberikan buku Najib dan Transformasi secara percuma.





Penang Division celebrated Workers day

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2013

NEW STRAITS TIMES | PAGE 3

STREETS NORTHERN **YOUR NEWS**

Celebrating Workers Day with children

CARING: MTUC Penang honours employees and invites children from two homes for its Workers Solidarity dinner

K. KANDIAH
GEORGE TOWN
penang@mediasiprime.com.my

THE Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) Penang division celebrated Workers Day by presenting donations to two orphanages at its Workers Solidarity dinner at the Taman Chai Leng Multipurpose Hall in Prai recently.

Division chairman S. Ravindran said after the successful participation of an orphanage last year, the committee decided to extend the invitation to more less fortunate children this year.

"We also decided to donate RM1,500 each to both the orphanages," said Ravindran.

The two orphanages were Rumah Kanak-Kanak Taman Bakti from Kepala Batas and the Sunshine Cottage Orphanage from Kulim.

Five guardians and 35 children attended the dinner.

Division secretary K. Veeriah made a personal donation by giving ang pow to the children.

The children were among 600 guests comprising government officials, union members, former

union officials and captains of industries.

Present at the dinner were the state Labour Department director Hoe Lean Fatt, MTUC former state chairman and ex-national vice-president Abdul Razak Abdul Hamid.

MTUC Penang organised many activities in conjunction with Workers Day.

Among them were the Workers Memorial Day, a two-day Socso-MTUC Health and Safety seminar; futsal and bowling competitions and other indoor games.

Ravindran said employees faced many challenges such as the non-

implementation of the Minimum Wages Order 2012 and the Retirement Age Act 2012; outsourcing; discrimination against workers through unjustified amendments to the Employment Act 1955; and disregard to workers and human rights regulations.

He said the division objected to the amendments made on the Employment Act.

He claimed that the changes to the Act favoured employers and failed safeguard the welfare of workers.

Ravindran, who is the Penang Municipal Services Union (PMSU) president, wants the government to also

provide a 24-hour Socso coverage for workers.

The present scheme only covers employees commuting from home to the workplace and vice versa.

Veeriah said those with work-related problems can come to the MTUC Penang Division office at 2965, Jalan Prai, Taman Inderawasih, Prai.

Alternatively, they can call S. Ravindran (019-477 6437); vice-chairman Mohamad Osman (016-477 5826); K. Veeriah (016-418 4520) or executive secretary Sahul Hamid (017-491 1636), for assistance.



K. Veeriah (second from left) presenting a cheque to S. Shan of Sunshine Cottage Orphanage (right). With them are (from left) S. Ravindran, MTUC Penang division treasurer V. Vijayan, Mohamad Osman and MTUC Penang division assistant secretary Mohamad Fauzi Ibrahim. Pic by K. Kandiah

GEORGE TOWN: THE Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) Penang division celebrated Workers Day by presenting donations to two orphanages at its Workers Solidarity dinner at the Taman Chai Leng Multipurpose Hall in Prai recently.

Division chairman S. Ravindran said after the successful participation of an orphanage last year, the committee decided to extend the invitation to more less fortunate children this year.

"We also decided to donate RM1,500 each to both the orphanages," said Ravindran.

The two orphanages were Rumah Kanak-Kanak Taman Bakti from Kepala Batas and the Sunshine Cottage Orphanage from Kulim. Five guardians and 35 children attended the dinner.

Division secretary K. Veeriah made a personal donation by giving ang pow to the children.

The children were among 600 guests comprising government officials, union members, former union officials and captains of industries.

Present at the dinner were the state Labour Department director Hoe Lean Fatt, MTUC former state chairman and ex-national vice-president Abdul Razak Abdul Hamid.

MTUC Penang organised many activities in conjunction with Workers Day. Among them were the Workers Memorial Day; a two-day Socso-MTUC Health and Safety seminar; futsal and bowling competitions and other indoor games.

Ravindran said employees faced many challenges such as the non-implementation of the Minimum Wages Order 2012 and the Retirement Age Act 2012; outsourcing; discrimination against workers through unjustified amendments to the Employment Act 1955; and disregard to workers and human rights regulations. He said the division objected to the amendments made on the Employment Act. He claimed that the changes to the Act favoured employers and failed safeguard the welfare of workers. Ravindran, who is the Penang Municipal Services Union (PMSU) president, wants the government to also provide a 24-hour Socso coverage for workers. The present scheme only covers employees commuting from home to the workplace and vice versa.

Veeriah said those with work-related problems can come to the MTUC Penang Division office at 2965, Jalan Prai, Taman Inderawasih, Prai. Alternatively, they can call S. Ravindran (019-477 6437); vice-chairman Mohamad Osman (016-477 5826), K. Veeriah (016-418 4520), for assistance.

K. Veeriah (second from left) presenting a cheque to S. Shan of Sunshine Cottage Orphanage (right). With them are (from left) S. Ravindran, MTUC Penang division treasurer V. Vijayan, Mohamad Osman and MTUC Penang division assistant secretary Mohamad Fauzi Ibrahim.

Sources : NST, June 14 2013



Electronic Union in Struggle

Workers at **ROHM-Wako Electronics (M) Sdn Bhd** at No. 1320, Kawasan Perindustrian Fasa 2, 16100 Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan had their secret ballot on 28/5/2013 and 29/5/2013 to determine whether the workers in that factory wanted to unionize.

Electronic Industry Employees Union Eastern Region Peninsular Malaysia (EIEUER)[KSIEWTSM (Kesatuan Sekerja Industri Elektronik Wilayah Timur Semenanjung Malaysia)] put in a claim for recognition to ROHM-Wako Electronics (M) Sdn Bhd on or about 16/9/2012 but the company refused to accord recognition, and hence the need for a 'secret ballot' to be conducted at the factory to determine whether 50% plus one of the qualified workers in the factory were in favour of the union.

Number of workers qualified to vote was 1,515 but only 960 workers cast their ballot, and the end result was 909 voted in favour of the union, and 51 voted against. That means 60 percent of the workers (i.e. 909/1515) were in favour of the Union.

Many workers who did not come out to vote were possibly by reason of disinterest, fear or even confusion. There were allegation that memorandum issued to shift workers stipulated the date that they were allowed to vote i.e. on just one of the days, be it 28/5/2013 or 29/5/2013. Workers in the shift that were allowed to vote on 28/5/2013 were not allowed to cast their vote on the 2nd date - the reason is beyond comprehension or logic given that the secret ballot was fixed for 2 days, and as such all workers should have been allowed to come at any day to vote. Allegedly, there was some confusion amongst non-shift workers who allegedly was not covered by the memorandum, they were allegedly only allowed to vote on 28/5/2013 and those who wanted to do so on 29/5/2013. Allegedly, the EIEUER has lodged a complaint about this - be that as it may, the workers and the Union were victorious when they managed to get 60% of workers in favour of the union.

Why did it take so long for the secret ballot to be conducted, i.e. more than eight(8) months after the claim for recognition was made on or about 16/9/2012? The laws and regulations really need to be amended to ensure, that in the event an employer company refuses to accord recognition, then the secret ballot should be conducted speedily, not more than thirty(30) days from the date the company refuses to accord recognition.

Why do companies not immediately accord recognition to unions, and expedite the enjoyment of the right to a recognized union and collective bargaining agreements? They, who respect worker rights, must accord

immediate recognition especially when a Union seeking recognition is able to show that a majority of the workers are already members of the Union. The act of delaying recognition is indicative of an employer that really is not keen to respect the fundamental rights of workers to unionize... *[The problem also is that the laws allow employers to evade recognition of a workers' right to a union and collective bargaining agreements..]*

The additional hurdle facing workers today is the increasing usage of fixed-duration employment contracts (short-term contracts), many a time these are for 1 year or less.

Regular employment until retirement was the norm, which provided the necessary security of tenure - which is needed to ensure a certain amount of financial security to the worker and their families. *Malaysian government has failed to ensure that all workers in Malaysia, save maybe migrant workers, do enjoy regular employment. Malaysian government has also failed to LIMIT the percentage of workers that an employer can employ using these short-term employment contracts.*

So, if an employer employs all its workers using 1 year employment contracts. Given the time taken for a union to be registered, time taken for a registered union to become a recognised union in the factory, and time for it to work out collective bargaining agreement, workers in such companies would never have a trade union. Worse still, the protection accorded to workers unionizing, i.e. protection from being discriminated against and/or terminated by employers who may try to 'kill' the attempt to unionize have been weakened when workers are let go when their employment contracts expire. There is still no protection for workers employed under short-term employment contracts, so much so that there is no right of continued employment even if the work the worker was doing continues to exist. Employer can simply employ a NEW worker to do the work.

In Malaysia, workers in the electronic industry have long been denied the right to a national union. On 27 May 2009, the Cabinet decided that only unions at regional level would be allowed, unlike the national unions for the other industries. The Western Regional Union (covering Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Perak) was registered on 1 December 2009, the Southern Regional Union (Johor, Malacca and Negri Sembilan) on 11 March 2010, the Northern Region (Penang, Kedah and Perlis) on 31 March 2010 and the Eastern Regional Union (Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang) on 23 August 2010.

Source: by Charles Hector on 6/04/2013

TPPA: 'We won't sign if price of medicine increases'

PARLIAMENT The Malaysian government is dead set against any extension of intellectual property rights involving medicine in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), which may see the prices of generic medication skyrocket.

"On patents involving the price of medication... we are adamant, we don't want the current regime to change; we will defend existing policies," International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed told the Dewan Rakyat during question time.

"If we don't agree, we can choose not to sign. We will protect our national interests. If we don't agree with some of the terms, we will not proceed," the minister pledged.

Mustapa said this in reply to a supplementary question from Anuar Musa (BN-Keterah), after answering the original question from Charles Santiago (DAP-Klang) on concerns about the impact of the TPPA on Malaysia's sovereignty.

On fears that the TPPA framework would allow foreign companies to question the policy decisions of a sovereign government like Malaysia's, Mustapha gave his assurance that Malaysia's involvement in the agreement would not limit the government from protecting its sovereignty.

'Malaysians firms too can sue foreign governments'

Pointing out that similar provisions in other free trade agreements were already in force and with no adverse effects, Mustapa argued that such an arrangement

worked both ways and Malaysian firms too could sue foreign governments.

The minister also gave his guarantee that the interests of Malaysian small and medium enterprises would also be protected and not squandered in negotiations for the TPPA.

He said the government had met with all stakeholders to get their views and input and he also gave his assurance all that further consultations continue as negotiations for the agreement developed.

However, Mustapa said it was not necessary to table the entire agreement to Parliament first as he believed past consultations and those planned in the future with stakeholders would provide enough input for the government to gauge and protect the nation's interests.

However, he admitted that it would be impossible, in a democratic country, to get 100 percent agreement on anything that is done, though he was sure that the government had "majority support" for what it aimed to achieve in the TPPA.

He is appreciative of all criticism and suggestions on the trade pact sent to him as these have helped to strengthen their arguments and widen their scope of discussion.

"What is important is that the benefit are more than the costs involved. All actions have bad and good consequences. That we cannot deny, but the important thing is that it is more good than bad," Mustapa argued.

Source: Malaysiakini, 27/6/2013,