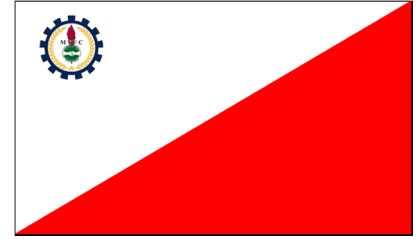




PEKERJA BERSATU RAKYAT MAJU



Buletin
Labour

Barisan Kepimpinan MTUC mengucapkan selamat berpuasa dan salam Aidil Fitri kepada semua yang beragama Islam

MTUC Prihatin: Keadaan Ekonomi Merudum

Nilai Ringgit Jatuh: apakah kesudahan dengan kejatuhan nilai ringgit yang lebih teruk dari apa yang dialami pada tahun 1997. Kesan ini sudah tentu menyebabkan kadar inflasi negara meningkat lebih dari 2.9%, walaupun unjuran inflasi berada pada kadar 3.8% bagi tahun 2015 berbanding 4.2% tahun 2014.(BH 2 Mac 2015). Kesan susulannya ialah golongan berpendapatan rendah terpaksa menderita. Hutang isi rumah akan meningkat.

GST dan kenaikan harga barangan: Pengenalan GST sebanyak 6% telah merumitkan keadaan dengan peningkatan harga barangan dan perkhidmatan yang tidak terkawal. Ramai peruncit kecil-kecilan telah pun menutup operasi perniagaan mereka walaupun kebanyakan kes-kes ini tidak dilaporkan dan tidak mendapat liputan dari media.

Pemberhentian pekerja: Kesempitan kewangan bukan sahaja dirasai oleh isi rumah malah syarikat-syarikat juga telah mulai merasainya. Inisiatif yang akan dan dilakukan ialah memberhentikan pekerja atas nama mengurangkan kos operasi dan sebagainya. Negara kita tiada satu sistem jaringan keselamatan sosial yang dapat memberi perlindungan kepada pekerja diluar dari lingkungan kesatuan seperti Insuran Pemberhentian kerja. Pekerja-pekerja MAS menjadi mangsa utama dan diikuti dengan syarikat-syarikat SME dan juga sektor perbankan yang memulakan inisiatif ini.

MTUC akan terus berjuang dan perlu berganding bahu bersama semua pemimpin dan kesatuan untuk menangani isu-isu ini bagi mengurangkan keperitan hidup kaum pekerja di negara ini.

N Gopal Kishnam, Setiausaha Agung



MTUC disappointed that workers Minimum Wage rates still not increased

Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) is disappointed that **Malaysia will still not increase the Minimum Wage** now in May 2015, noting that cost of living over last years have increased drastically by, amongst other reasons, the removal of subsidies and the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax(GST).

It was reported that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at the at the government's Labour Day celebrations at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching on 1/5/2015 '**said minimum wage could not be increased now**' (Star, 2/5/2015, 11MP to focus on human resources development, says PM). This is unacceptable because it is **unjust that workers in Malaysia are required to enjoy same rate of Minimum Wages for more than 2 years and 4 months**

National Wage Consultation Council Act 2011 in Section 25(1) clearly state that, "The Council shall, at least once in every two years, review the Minimum Wages Order", and this certainly includes the Minimum Wage Rates. Two years is the statutory maximum period before which Minimum Wage rates should be increased, and the law is clear that Minimum Wages

could be reviewed and increased even at a faster rate depending the effectiveness of current rates having due regard to also the socio-economic reality of workers and their families. Clearly, **the cost of living has escalated since the last Minimum Wage Order in 2012 was made**, and this should have reasonably led to increases in the Minimum Wage rates.

MTUC calls on the Malaysian government to immediately increase Minimum Wage rates to at least RM1,200, and this entitlement should be made effective as of 1st January 2015. Employers should be compelled to immediately pay all monies due to the worker by reason of the increased Minimum Wage from the beginning of the year until the relevant date. There should be no exemption for any employer, and all workers, including migrant workers, in Malaysia should be treated equally without discrimination.

PS MTUC 19th May 2015

MTUC PERAK



Program MTUC bahagian Perak 28 Mei 2015. Dialog bersama kesatuan gabungan berkaitan undang-undang dan Akta Kerja di pejabat MTUC Bahagian Perak Klebang.



FORUM ON STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

MTUC telah mengadakan forum "State of the Environment" pada 2hb Jun 2015 di Wisma MTUC. Seramai 55 peserta telah menyertai forum ini yang diuruskan oleh Jawatankuasa Persekitaran MTUC. Penceramah utama ialah Encik Gurmit Singh (CETDEM) seorang pakar alam sekitar. Sesi panel bertajuk Alam Sekitar dan kesannya terhadap masyarakat, telah diadakan yang diketuai oleh Encik Sivanathiran, Penolong Pengarah Jabatan Alam Sekitar dan Encik Balakrishnan (EIWU).



TPPA compromises M'sian workers

Kota Kinabalu: Plans to amend several laws could see the safety net of Malaysian workers compromised to pave the way for the adoption of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) in Malaysia.

Malaysia Trades Union Congress (MTUC) Sabah Chapter Chairman Awang Ali Ahmad said TPPA requires an open market to function and does not go well with the existing strong sets of laws protecting local workers. Thus, the government proposed several amendments be made to the Sabah Labour Ordinance, the Industrial Relations Act and Workers' Union Act to allow TPPA to materialise.

"With the TPPA coming and 12 nations are involved, it would be hard for investments going into Malaysia if laws protecting the workers are tough. <http://www.mtuc.org.my/tpa-compromises-msian-workers/>

Seminar Perhubungan Industri Dalam Industri Hospitaliti

Seminar Perhubungan Industri Dalam Industri



Hospitaliti Bersama Siswazah Uitm Shah Alam Selangor

30hb Mei 2015, bertempat di Dewan Sri Impian Hotel



UiTM Shah Alam Selangor Jawatankuasa Belia Kongres Kesatuan Sekerja Malaysia dan Kongres Kesatuan Sekerja Malaysia bahagian Selangor telah di jemput bagi menyertai seminar yang bertajuk

“Perhubungan Industri dalam Industri Hospitaliti” yang dianjurkan oleh pelajar Pasca Siswazah Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel dan Pelancongan UiTM Shah Alam Selangor. Dua orang penceramah En Christopher S.Raj, Presiden Persatuan Hotel Majikan dan En Ismail Nasaruddin Kesatuan Kebangsaan Anak-Anak Kapal Malaysia membincangkan isu semasa dan peranan Kesatuan Sekerja serta pihak Organisasi di dalam Industri Hospitaliti.

Antara perkara yang dibahaskan adalah berkaitan dengan Caj Perkhidmatan dalam sektor hotel, GST, Kontraktor Tenaga Kerja, gangguan seksual serta peranan yang boleh dimainkan oleh Kesatuan Sekerja dan Organisasi dalam Industri Hospitaliti yang sedang pesat berkembang mengikut peredaran semasa.

Turut serta Dr Nirwan Noh Setiausaha bahagian Pembangunan Industri, Kementerian Pelancongan dan Kebudayaan Malaysia, Datuk Rashidi Hasbullah Timbalan Ketua Setiausaha (Pelancongan) Kementerian Pelancongan dan Kebudayaan Malaysia. Tidak lupa juga tetamu khas dari Kesatuan NUB-HRW, CEUPM, NUFAM, EIEUWR, Kakitangan Malaysia Airlines, Shangri La Hotel Putrajaya, Pensyarah dan pelajar Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia dan Pelajar Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel dan Pelancongan UiTM Shah Alam Selangor.

dilaporkan oleh :

Syamsul Azwan Mustar,
Setiausaha, Jawatankuasa Belia MTUC.

Govt eyes productivity growth of 4pc by 2020

NEW INITIATIVES: Target will be included in the 11th Malaysia Plan

MUHAMMAD AHMAD HAMDAN
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MALAYSIA aims to achieve a higher productivity growth rate of four per cent by 2020, in line with its vision of becoming a developed nation by then.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said the target will be included in the 11th Malaysia Plan that will be tabled by the Prime Minister next month.

"We have to work hard on this. It is not easy because it requires what we call a national movement. We will come up with some new initiatives to boost productivity in Malaysia."

It is not just the government or the private sector's role that counts, it is also the mindset of all Malaysians," he said after attending a meeting on four government-

backed programmes for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), here, yesterday.

Malaysia achieved a productivity growth rate of 2.2 per cent last year, which is considered low compared to other emerging economies such as Thailand at 2.9 per cent and Indonesia at 6.7 per cent.

However, Mustapa said the rate is still higher than those of developed economies such as Japan and the United States' 0.8 per cent and Singapore's 0.04 per cent.

He said the government would introduce additional measures to boost productivity among the SMEs that will be announced in the next meeting in June.

The meeting also aims to promote the four government-backed programmes — Public-Research Network by Ministry of Education, Steinbecker Malaysia Foundation by Malaysian Innovation Agency (AIM), Sirin-Foundation Partnership, and Pricom Ventures Sdn



International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed says Malaysia achieved a productivity growth rate of 2.2 per cent last year. Pic by Abdulhaz Yusof

Bhd, an SME Corp Malaysia and AIM initiative.

The four programme owners, which offer research and development and commercialisation (R&D&C) services to businesses, also updated Mustapa on their latest progress.

There are 119 R&D&C projects that are under way while 429 more are in the pipeline for business clients.

The ongoing projects are worth about RM11.1 million.

Tetap pertahan umur persaraan 62 tahun

» Presiden CUEPACS mahu syor dilaksanakan demi kebaikan kerajaan

Oleh Faiz Zainudin
faizagah@com.my
Kuala Lumpur

Presiden CUEPACS, Datuk Azizi Muda semalam mempertahankan cadangan untuk memperkukuhkan undang-undang yang menetapkan umur persaraan di 62 tahun, dengan alasan ia bukan saja menjamin

Katanya, jika dilaksanakan, kerajaan tidak perlu membuat pelantikan untuk berkhidmat secara kontrak selepas mereka bersara seperti dilakukan pada masa ini.

Beliau berkata pelaksanaan itu juga tidak membabitkan semua perjawatan, cuma bagi jawatan kritikal dan profesional untuk menampung keperluan tenaga pakar dalam negara.

"Kerajaan tidak perlu melantik sebanyak dua kali, sudah tamat perkhidmatan nanti lagi secara kontrak, itu menyebabkan kerajaan kena belanja dua kali untuk bayaran pencek dan kontrak."

Merugikan kerajaan

"Ini merugikan kerajaan, tambahan pula golongan pakar dalam pelbagai bidang ini mem-

ngan pengalaman mereka yang luas," katanya ketika dihubungi di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata demikian menanggapi reaksi pegawai pihak yang tidak bersetuju dengan cadangan itu yang disifatkan sebagai kritikal dan profesional untuk menampung keperluan tenaga pakar dalam negara."

Pelaksanaan itu juga tidak membabitkan semua perjawatan, cuma bagi jawatan kritikal dan profesional untuk menampung keperluan tenaga pakar dalam negara"

Azizi Muda,

tidak relevan selain melambatkan proses kenaikan pangkat bagi kakitangan lain. Malah, di media sosial, cadangan Azizi itu disindir dengan pos wajah seorang nenek bertugas di pejabat.

Mengulas lanjut, Azizi berkata golongan muda khususnya tidak perlu bimbang sekiranya cadangan itu dilaksanakan kerana sampai saat ini mereka juga akan menjadi golongan tua.

Selain itu, dia bukan dibuka untuk semua kategori perjawatan, beliau berkata tapisan ketat juga akan dilakukan bagi memastikan golongan terabit memenuhi syarat kelayakan termasuk kesihatan baik.

"Golongan muda tidak perlu bimbang dan mengelting, kita kena terima hakikat perubahan akan berlaku, orang muda juga akan menjadi tua."

Setiap tahun ramai penjawat awam bersara dan meninggalkan dunia, kekosongan tempat diisi golongan ini. Justeru, ia tidak mengganggu proses kenaikan pangkat dan saya yakin langkah ini dapat memampukan negara maju menjelang

ISU-ISU TERKINI

THE STAR, WEDNESDAY 27 MAY 2015

It stays at 55

It took just two days. EPF members overwhelmingly voted to retain full withdrawals at the age of 55 and agreed to have new contributions between ages 55 and 60 to be locked in. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced that this option will be adopted after about 50,000 contributors responded to the fund's online consultation process. > See Page 3 for reports by NEVILLE SPYKEMAN



4 nation

A better MAS layoff deal

More attractive severance package brings some relief

By B.K. SIDIHU
bksidhu@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: In a last minute change of plan, more than a third of the 20,000 Malaysia Airlines (MAS) staff will be getting termination payments according to their collective agreements (CA). The move reverses earlier reports that the payments would be about half of what is split under the CA, something which left the staff very unhappy.

Some say MAS had bowed to pressure from unions to finally give such terms, but a source close to the matter claims "they had always been working on this suggestion but the unions did not know about it".

Whoever the idea may be, the unions appear to have managed to push the corridors of power to intervene on the severance package.

Yesterday, the airline's nine union leaders were told that the staff payout would be according to the CA and this was received with much cheer at a meeting held at MAS with the airline's parent body Khazanah Nasional Bhd and MAS officials.

A large chunk of MAS employees are unionised.

"It is a welcome move. It is politically and morally the right thing to do, to pay according to the CA. That is what we should get and what we deserve."

Fortunately they did not use the MAS act 2015 to circumvent. Unfortunately not all of

MAS restructuring reflect fairness, compassion and transparency.

MAS is scheduled to axe between 6,000 and 8,000 staff over the next one year as part of its plan to shrink into a smaller airline with regional focus. The remainder of the airline involves the migration of assets and liabilities of the existing MAS to a new company known as MAS Bhd, which will retain two-thirds of the workforce.

Those not offered jobs with MAS Bhd will be given one-month basic salary for every year of service for those up to 10 years of service. Those who have served MAS for more than 10 years will get 1.5 months of salary for every year of service.

The airline's senior management employees (senior president and above) and those in control will not be subject to such terms.

Those accepting the offer to join the new MAS Bhd, will be offered a sign-on payment and if they are still with MAS Bhd after 18 months, will get a retention payment.

Khazanah had initially set aside RM1.65bil for staff payouts but since they are now paying according to the CA, the total payout will be higher with some suggesting it may be as high as RM2.5bil.

Due to the change in heart, the 20,000 termination letters that were supposed to be distributed today by the airline will not go out as planned. But MAS is working furiously to have the letters sent out over the next few days as the staff will still get them around

Riot: Govt will assist staff laid off in MAS exercise

SEPAANG: A federal minister said he believed the Government would do its best to assist the thousands of Malaysia Airlines (MAS) staff who could be laid off under the national carrier's restructuring exercise. Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Richard Riot (Ismail) said the Government had the staff's welfare in mind and would "figure out a way" to help them.

"From about 20,000 people in the workforce, I understand about 6,000 will be laid off. That is an alarming figure, but I think the Government will be able to assist them."

"I am sure the Government has taken the plight of the staff into consideration," said Riot at a press conference here yesterday.

Riot also commended MAS' new chief executive officer Christoph Mueller for not wasting time in engaging MAS union bodies.

"I understand that the new CEO has already had two engagements with the employees, associations, even though they just reported for duty. I think that is a good move," said Riot.

He declined to comment further on the issue.

The new deal

- > For those who lose their jobs
- > One-month salary for every completed year of service (up to 10 years)
- > One-and-a-half-month salary for every completed year of service (those above 10 years)
- > Single parents, husband-and-wife teams, and those physically challenged will get an additional 30%
- > All unused leave till end August will be paid for
- > Medical benefits will be provided until they get another job or up to one year
- > Lump sum payment by end of August

For those who are

'RM1,200 wage for maids too high'

Increase not justified when compared to country's minimum wage, says Riot

PETALING JAYA: Human Resource Minister Datuk Seri Richard Riot has dismissed a proposal by the Indonesian government for higher pay for its maids.

Riot said the proposed increased fixed minimum pay for an Indonesian maid of RM1,200 was too high compared to the country's minimum wage of RM900.

"Following the Indonesian government's proposal, we have asked them to explain the full justification in writing but until today, we have yet to receive any response from them," he said in a statement yesterday.

Salaries for domestic workers became an issue last Friday when

Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Hermono said that his country had submitted proposals to Malaysia to consider improving the working conditions of Indonesian maids.

Employers are fuming and work agencies called to appeal against the proposal by Indonesia.

Riot said the Government would

hold discussions with employers associations, workers unions and employment agencies on the proposal before deciding on any considerations and the direction of its implementation.

He said that the proposed increase of wages by Indonesia was meant to entice more Indonesian domestic maids to choose Malaysia

as their preferred job destination.

Last year, Indonesian President Joko Widodo said the republic was thinking of stopping its supply of female domestic labour abroad.

Early this month, it decided not to send workers to the Middle East following a number of high-profile abuse and murder cases involving domestic workers.

Human trafficking in our midst

If not for mass graves and other horror stories revealed over the past weeks, human traffickers would have continued to operate freely.

THERE seems to be no escape from politicians making silly statements, even as we are in the midst of a migrant crisis which has exposed Malaysia as a heinous hub for human trafficking.

The grim discovery of mass graves and camps set up by human traffickers, including one just 100 metres away from the border with Thailand, reflects the appalling state of our immigration enforce-

ment. Among the popular "dark tourism" sites include the Cheong Ek, also known as Killing Fields of Cambodia, where some 14,000 people were killed during the Khmer Rouge's reign of terror and the Sept 11 memorial and museum in New York.

What would be the story of our "dark tourism" site?

See how human traffickers brazenly built such a nice prison camp

but treated the cases as immigration violations instead.

The report noted that some immigration officials had been accused of involvement in the smuggling of trafficking victims but the Government did not investigate any such cases.

The scourge of human trafficking through our borders has gone on for years.

If not for the mass graves and

As for the Rohingyas, considered one of the world's most persecuted peoples, the situation is worse, having no legal status in their country and unwanted everywhere.

The 800,000-strong Muslim minority from Rakhine, previously called Arakan, which borders Bangladesh, have lived there for several centuries.

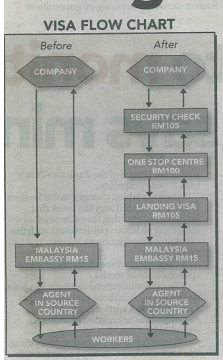
Since 1982, when the government of Gen Ne Win enacted the coun-

As for the Rohingyas, considered one of the world's most persecuted peoples, the situation is worse, having no legal status in their country and unwanted everywhere.

It was called the "Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean" because Myanmar threatened not to attend if the word Rohingya was used. The delegates never even got beyond addressing the crux of the issue.

Instead of holding Myanmar responsible for the persecution of the Rohingyas, many of the representatives dared not even mention

Ire over middlemen for foreign worker visa



> Move results in higher costs of hiring them

By R. NADESWARAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: The Home Ministry has appointed middlemen in foreign countries to "process" visa applications of workers coming to Malaysia.

This has resulted in higher costs of recruiting foreign workers and has drawn protests from worker groups in source countries, especially Indonesia and Nepal.

Previously, foreign workers or their agents could submit their applications directly to the foreign missions and pay RM5 for processing.

However, a new ruling, which came into force last November, requires applicants of the foreign landing visa (VLN) to submit their forms to a one stop centre (OSC). On top of that, another company has been appointed to carry out "immigration security clearance" (ISC) checks.

According to documents sighted by thisStar, the ISC company is allowed to charge RM100 or its equivalent.

The company is supposed to identify applicants who have been blacklisted from

entering the country. Payment to OSC has been fixed at RM100 and charge for "VLN services" has been set at RM100.

These additional expenses would have to be borne by the employer. It is not known how these companies were appointed.

The companies have set up offices in various Asian countries where workers are sourced from.

The ministry's letter, signed by its secretary-general Datuk Seri Mohamed Khalid Shariff, was addressed to the Foreign Ministry and the Immigration Department.

Employers had been kept in the dark about this development until protests were held at two of the foreign missions.

He justified the new system and service charge by claiming it would enable a smooth flow in processing visa applications.

"The implementation of these new procedures does not incur any costs to the government as the employers will bear all expenses."

"The fees imposed are justified as they cover the operational costs incurred by the companies," said Mohamed Khalid.

Gender-wage bias still raging

Men earn more doing the same job on many fronts, report finds

By PATRICK LEE
patrick.lee@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Men are still earn-

workers compared to male workers who tend to work as low-skilled workers," the report said.

Average monthly salary

Industry	Salary
Real estate	1
Hospitality	1
Manufacturing	1
Professional and technical	1
Administrative	1
Construction	1

Source: Salary and Wages Survey Report 2

Average monthly salary

Industry	Salary
Skilled workers	1
Services and sales	1



MTUC is concerned about refugees and is against all forms of slavery and forced labour



Malaysian Trade Union Congress is shocked at the discovery of about 139 graves, and signs of torture, in more than two dozen squalid camps in Northern Malaysia suspected to have been used by gangs involved in human trafficking of migrants across the border from Thailand.

MTUC is against all forms of human trafficking which includes exploitation of workers. MTUC is against slavery and forced labour.

MTUC calls on the Malaysian government to immediately investigate, and determine whether these were really human trafficking camps, and also whether the deaths have been brought about by torture and murder. If so, then immediate action must be taken to bring the said perpetrators to justice.

There is also the possibility that some of these 'camps' were really housing used by undocumented migrant workers, who always worry about the possibility of arrest, detention, imprisonment, whipping and deportation. There are estimated that at present there are at least 2 million undocumented migrants in Malaysia – most of them are workers.

MTUC has always taken the position that all workers, local and migrant should be treated equally. Of late, burden on migrant workers have increased, amongst others, from the transfer of the obligation of

paying levy from employer to the migrant worker, of increasing cost of access to healthcare in public hospitals, the delaying of migrant workers the entitlement of minimum wages when their fellow local worker at the same workplace already enjoyed it. All these have an impact on worker solidarity and trade unions. It also drives some documented workers to opt to become undocumented workers, and others just to enter Malaysia as undocumented workers. MTUC hopes that the Malaysian governments reviews its policy and ensure equal treatment of workers.

Without the about 2 million documented migrant workers in the trade union movement, it makes unions weak. Commonality of the worker reality is an important factor that brings workers together as trade unions to struggle for their rights.

MTUC is also concerned about the welfare and the well-being of thousands of refugee boat people, many of whom are fleeing persecution in their homeland. Malaysia should be humane and show care and concern for wellbeing and welfare, and not just take the position of shutting the doors of all these persons that come to Malaysia seeking sanctuary. It is not right to risk the lives of men, women and children in open seas, and it is also wrong to send back asylum seekers and refugees back to the very country they fled. It may be time for Malaysia to enact a law on how to deal with asylum seekers and refugees in Malaysia.

MTUC, like the International Labour Organisation (ILO), is for the promotion of opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. MTUC is against all forms of 'slavery', forced or bonded labour, and exploitation of workers.

PS 2hb Jun 2015

Majlis Makan Malam MTUC Perak

Aktiviti MTUC bahagian perak

1. Majlis makan malam sempena Hari Pekerja pada 9 Mei 2015

2. Kursus PLWS anjuran JPP di Casuarina Meru Raya pada 12 Mei 2015.

Hamzah b Jaaffar, Setiausaha MTUC Bahagian Perak

Aktiviti MTUC Bahagian Perak majlis makan malam di dewan Majlis perbandaran Manjung yang dihadiri oleh pegawai Khas YAB DS Di Raja Dr Zambry B Abd Kadir Menteri Besar Perak.



Kursus Kewangan 9-11 Jun 2015 MTUC

Seramai 21 peserta dari pelbagai sektor telah menghadiri kursus yang diadakan di Pusat MTUC Subang Jaya Selangor. Antara topik yang telah dibincangkan ialah Pengurusan, penyelenggaraan dan pengawalan Proce-



dur perakaunan kesatuan serta isu-isu bagaimana meningkatkan dana kesatuan. Penceramah undangan ialah Encik Lavinyian manakala penceramah dalaman ialah Sdra Khalid Atan, Sdra Jey Kumar, Sdra Dauzkaply, dan Sdra Awang Ibrahim .

MTUC disappointed that after 2 years and 4 months, workers Minimum Wage rates still not increased



Malaysian Trade Union Congress is disappointed that Malaysia will still not increase the Minimum

Wage now in May 2015, noting that cost of living over last years have increased drastically by, amongst other reasons, the removal of subsidies and the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax(GST).

It was reported that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at the government's Labour Day celebrations at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching on 1/5/2015 'said minimum wage could not be increased now' (Star, 2/5/2015, 11MP to focus on human resources development, says PM). This is unacceptable because it is unjust that workers in Malaysia are required to enjoy same rate of Minimum Wages for more than 2 years and 4 months

National Wage Consultation Council Act 2011 in Section 25(1) clearly state that, "The Council shall, at least once in every two years, review the Minimum Wages Order", and this certainly includes the Minimum Wage Rates. Two years is the statutory maximum period before which Minimum Wage rates should be increased, and the law is clear that Minimum Wages could be reviewed and increased even at a faster rate depending the effectiveness of current rates having due regard to also the socio-economic reality of workers and their families. Clearly, the cost of living has escalated since the last Minimum Wage Order in 2012 was made, and this should have reasonably led to increases in the Minimum Wage rates.

MTUC notes that the Malaysian government has effectively denied many workers the full enjoyment of their right to Minimum Wages as of 1st January 2013 by reason of the various exemptions provided to certain employers or classes of employers. MTUC also reiterates its protest on that discriminatory nature of Minimum Wages (Amendment) Order 2013 which created a situation where migrant workers in certain workplaces were denied Minimum Wages for a certain period when their fellow local workers already enjoyed this right to Minimum Wages.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak was clearly wrong when he said that, 'We have only implemented the minimum wage policy for about a year and five months...' (Malaysian Digest, 3/5/2015, 'Too soon to review minimum wage' – Najib), because the relevant Minimum Wage Order was made in July 2012, whereby workers in Malaysia started enjoying minimum wages on 1 January 2013 – and it has been more than 2 years and 4 months since workers started enjoying a Minimum Wage of RM900 (Peninsular Malaysia) and RM800 (for Sabah and Sarawak). MTUC was also unhappy about this discrimination against workers in Sabah and Sarawak, considering also that the cost of living in East Malaysia is higher than in Peninsular Malaysia, a fact that is also reflected in the official poverty line income.

MTUC calls on the Malaysian government to immediately increase Minimum Wage rates to at least RM1,200, and this entitlement should be made effective as of 1st January 2015. Employers should be compelled to immediately pay all monies due to the worker by reason of the increased Minimum Wage from the beginning of the year until the relevant date. There should be no exemption for any employer, and all workers, including migrant workers, in Malaysia should be treated equally without discrimination.

PS 19 Mei 2015, MTUC

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