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SPECIAL COVERAGE

LIPUTAN KHAS

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Tuesday delivered good news to the Malaysian workforce by announcing five 'gifts' in recognition and appreciation of its contribution to the national economy and development. Addressing the 2018 Workers Day rally at Dewan Merdeka of the Putra World Trade Centre here, the Prime Minister said the government would provide an RM3-million special grant to the Malaysian Trades

private sector employees as well as the employers and 742 trade unions were the "flesh and blood" of the nation. He said that if the Barisan Nasional was returned to power in the 14th general election on May 9, the government's second gift would be to raise the minimum wage from RM1,000 and RM920 to a new level that would be announced this year. Najib said he had been informed that since 1998, the MTUC call for a minimum wage policy

for Peninsular Malaysia and RM800 for Sabah and Sarawak in 2012. "Last year, the minimum wage was raised by 11 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, to RM1,000 in the peninsula and RM920 in Sabah and Sarawak," he said. Elaborating on the gifts, Najib said that in the effort to nurture wholesome families among employees, the BN government proposed a special initiative of mandatory paternity leave of at least three days for husbands

Najib Announces Five Gifts For Workers



Union Congress (MTUC) in appreciation of the workers' loyalty to the government and country all along. "This special grant will be given this year. It will be left to the MTUC to distribute the contribution to the other trade unions," he said to the thousands of workers in the audience. Najib said that if the civil servants had been deemed loyal supporters of the government, the whole Malaysian workforce of public and

was ignored by the then top leader of the government which left the workers having to struggle with monthly wages as low as RM400. However, within a year of taking office as the prime minister, he had announced the implementation of a National Minimum Wage Policy and subsequently the National Wages Consultative Council Act 2011 which saw the minimum wage set at RM900

of private sector employees. He said the amendments to the law to provide for the initiative were expected to be tabled in Parliament early next year at the latest. The prime minister said the government had agreed to introduce the Employment Insurance System (SIP) which was realised in January to assist retrenched workers as a result of downsizing of companies and so on. Although the full SIP payment



could only be implemented from January next year, he said the fate of workers who lost their livelihood was not forgotten as the government had allocated RM122 million to the Social Security Organisation (Socso) to make SIP payments to the affected employees.

He said, if the mandate is returned to BN on May 9, the government would provide another RM60 million to Socso, making it a total allocation of RM182 million for that purpose. "With this additional RM60 million, this interim aid rate will be increased from RM600 for a period of one to three months to RM1,000 for the

first month, RM800 for the second month and RM600 for the third month," he said. Meanwhile to produce skilled manpower in facing the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the prime minister announced an allocation of RM200 million through the Human Resources Development Bhd to undertake the human capital strategic initiatives.

Najib said, despite the desire of an opposition leader in wanting to review the e-hailing services such as Grab, the BN government was determined to protect its own workers from diverse segments of the community, including e-hailing drivers, fishermen, farmers, market

traders and arts enthusiasts. "Workers are not just service providers to the country, but are more than that, no matter where they are, BN uplifts and recognises the workers as the backbone, sweat and blood of the government in this homeland since independence.

"If the BN government is like a flower, then the workers are like the stalks. Therefore don't let the workers be swayed and enticed by other 'flowers'. continue to enjoy the honey from the petals of the BN, which is the genuine suitor," he said to the applause of those present. Themed "Skilled Workers: Drivers of the Nation's Excellence," today's celebration also saw recognition being accorded to several workers' leaders and employers by the prime minister.

Among others, the National Workers' Personality Award (executive) was presented to the late Datuk Izham Yusoff from Bina Darulaman Bhd, National Workers' Personality Award (non executive) to Bahrin Buang from Lumit Mara Skills Institute and Disabled Workers Personality Award to Associate Professor Dr Naziaty Mohd Yaacob from University of Malaya. Also present were Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Richard Riot Jaem, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa and MTUC president Datuk Abdul Halim Mansor.

-- BERNAMA

