

## KERATAN AKHBAR

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### Govt to present progressive wage policy white paper to Parliament soon – Rafizi



The government will present the white paper on the progressive wage policy in Dewan Rakyat, said Economic Minister Rafizi Ramli. - Bernama file pic

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government will present the white paper on the progressive wage policy in Dewan Rakyat, said Economic Minister Rafizi Ramli.

In a parliamentary written reply, Rafizi said several critical elements have also been identified to be implemented in the policy, such as voluntary implementation focusing on local companies, especially among micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

This, he said, was significant as a huge portion of low-wage earners were those in the MSME sector.

"The white paper on the progressive wage policy proposal will be presented in Parliament and I welcome any input or suggestions from the members of Parliament during the presentation of the paper (soon).

"Input given by MPs will undoubtedly assist the ministry in implementing the progressive wage policy, which is expected to increase income and help employees address the challenges of the cost of living," he said.

Rafizi said this in response to Rodiyah Sapiee (GPS-Batang Sadong) on the critical elements taken into account to implement the progressive wage policy.

Meanwhile, he said salary guidelines for each sector and job category will be issued and employers who pay salaries based on the guidelines will be eligible for government incentives.

He added that an action plan would also be formulated to ensure that the number of foreign workers does not exceed 15 per cent of the total workforce.

"The government's goal is to make local workers more competitive through the implementation of the policy and this can be achieved through increased productivity and wages, as well as continuous skills enhancement and retraining programmes.

"Consequently, this (the policy) will also indirectly reduce the reliance of employers on foreign workers.

"The implementation of a multi-tier levy mechanism and initiatives to promote automation and mechanisation will also help reduce reliance on foreign workers."

The progressive wage policy announced by the government is aimed at increasing worker salaries and achieving fairer income distribution.

The policy, however, was not included in the 2024 Budget tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim last Friday, raising questions by certain parties, particularly after Rafizi reportedly said the financial allocation for the policy would be included in the 2024 Budget.

Rafizi had previously said the policy was expected to be implemented in April or May next year and had been approved at the cabinet level.