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Safety first for all: Sim (front centre) with Malaysian workers at the World Occupational Safety Health Day 2024 event at Cyberjaya yesterday. — AZHAR MAHFUF/The Star

New rules to benefit workers

Amended law on workplace safety to take effect on June 1

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CYBERJAYA: Employers must analyse risks in the workplace and appoint a health safety coordinator under a newly amended law that takes effect on June 1.

The amended Occupational Safety and Health Act is targeted at improving safety and health at workplaces throughout the country, said Human Resources Minister Steven Sim Chee Keong.

"The employer is obliged to appoint a safety and health coordinator if there are five employees and above," he explained.

With the presence of these trained people, he voiced hope that the work environment would

be safer.

He said the Act was meant to ensure that employers are responsible for identifying risks in the workplace.

As for the workers, he said they had the right to remove themselves from an unsafe environment at work.

"This is in line with Convention 155 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)," he said.

C155, which is the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155), called for, among others, a national policy to prevent accidents and injury to health in the course of work.

Speaking yesterday after officiating the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, Sim said the

newly amended Act would provide more benefits to employees because of the additional provisions to look after their welfare.

"One of the advantages of this Act is that workers have the right to isolate themselves from high-risk places," he said.

He noted that the amendments were approved back in 2021 but its enforcement had been delayed. However, he said he had looked into its implementation within 100 days of becoming the minister.

"I always insist that the safety and health practices of workers must catch up with the changing times," he said.

On yesterday's event which brought together 2,500 health and safety practitioners, Sim also said

the ministry had launched a campaign to create awareness about the mental safety of workers.

He said that about 13,000 workers had registered for the Occupational Mental Health First Aid training programme since it was launched in February.

About 4,000 of them had been trained so far, he added.

"We hope that this effort will further strengthen safety and health practices in the workplace, especially in the aspect of mental care," he said.



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