

The Sun Daily - On Labour Day Eve, Guan Eng Says Govt Will Create New Jobs For Malaysians

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Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng is seen arriving at the the 14th Penang State Assembly session at Dewan Sri Pinang in George Town April 30, 2019. — Picture by Sayuti Zainudin

KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 — The federal government will seek to create new jobs for Malaysians amid challenges posed by the digital revolution and technological advances, which may cause certain jobs to be obsolete, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said today.

In his message for Labour Day tomorrow, Lim said job creation is needed as Malaysia undergoes competition from countries with lower costs, such as Vietnam, as well as “digital disruption caused by the transition into the digital economy and Industry 4.0” and new technology that may potentially destroy low-productivity jobs.

“To shield existing workers from job losses caused by digital disruption, new jobs must be created,” he said in his message.

He said the government is currently studying the option of giving out “monthly income supplements” to encourage employers to hire workers, while also encouraging workers to work for a “more reasonable pay”.

“Further, we have to expose our workers to the latest technology, be it automation, artificial intelligence and robotics to enhance our productivity, competitiveness and wages,” Lim, who is also Bagan MP, said.

Lim also said the government is seeking to encourage investment in new sectors directly relevant to Industry 4.0, which he said would “create high-quality jobs for all Malaysians”. He said the government is formulating market-based solutions to raise Malaysian graduates’ income, while also addressing unemployment woes especially among youths and graduates.

Noting the increase by 48 per cent of total approved foreign direct investment to RM80.5 billion in 2018 from RM54.4 billion in the preceding year, Lim said these investments are expected to create an estimated 50,000

new jobs in the beginning of these years as the projects start being realised.

“But we do not want just any job. We need jobs that uplift us instead of trapping us in a vicious cycle that threatens to leave us with little security during an emergency. We need jobs that supports shared prosperity,” he said.

Noting that the government recognises that Malaysians only earned 35 per cent of the GDP in 2017, Lim said Malaysia should aspire to reach the levels recorded in developed nations such as Singapore and US at 41 per cent and 43 per cent respectively.

Lim said unity against those who seek to divide the nation with racial sentiments and religious hatred was required for success.

“Only by moving forward together as one people, including both employers and employees, celebrating diversity, respecting our differences, encouraging women to work and upholding workers’ rights can we enjoy shared prosperity,” he said.

Lim is also the finance minister, but his comments were made under his party position and position as a federal lawmaker.