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Minimum wage at petrol kiosks

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Damansara Foresta

KUALA LUMPUR: Some 3,600 petrol stations nationwide will set a minimum wage for their workers starting Jan 1, 2013.

Petrol station wages in the peninsula will be bumped up to RM900, while wages in Sabah and Sarawak will go up to RM800. Current wages start from RM600.

Petrol Dealers Association of Malaysia (PDAM) president **Datuk Hashim Othman** said the move was expected to raise operational costs by 30%.

"The cost of operations will go up, not only due to wages, but also higher EPF, Socso, overtime rates, and so on.

"The whole structure, everything will be increased," he said here yesterday.

He said that as a result, outlets would have to cut costs, including upgrading all stations with self-service facilities and reducing manpower, particularly foreign workers.

An estimated 70% of Malaysia's 50,000 petrol station workers are foreigners.

Hashim said petrol dealers paid foreigners and locals the same, although the former cost more due to levies, insurance and other costs.

In 2008, the Government also called for a restriction of foreign workers at petrol outlets, with a maximum of three per kiosk.

Additionally, he said at least 20% of the country's petrol stations did not have self-service systems, even 15 years after its introduction in 1997.

Hashim said the PDAM tried to get the National Consultative Wage Council to postpone imposing a minimum wage on dealers, but was refused in a Dec 20 letter.

Malaysia's minimum wage was gazetted on July 1, with the order taking effect on Jan 1, 2013.

To deal with rising costs, Hashim asked the Government to consider reviewing its controlled sales commission for petrol dealers, last raised in 2008.

Previously, it was reported that petrol dealers enjoyed a commission of 12.19 sen per litre of petrol and seven sen for diesel.

On another matter, petrol dealers raised fears that the looming "fiscal cliff" in the US could raise oil prices worldwide.



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PDAM deputy president Datuk Zulkifli Mokti said that Malaysia would not benefit if fuel prices were raised to buffer the effects of the "fiscal cliff".

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