

Less industry accident, says Lee

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KOTA KINABALU: The Social Security Organisation (SOCSCO) in Sabah reported a total of 363 cases from January to May this year in which it provided aid in financial guarantees and protection to employees and their families due to accidents.

There were 116 cases in Kota Kinabalu, 74 in Sandakan, 96 in Tawau, 36 in Lahad Datu, 22 in Keningau and 19 in the Federal Territory of Labuan.

Chairman of National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said he was pleased to note that awareness on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) has steadily increased over the years in Malaysia.

The number of industrial accidents in the country dropped 45 per cent over a span of 10 years, with 67,163 cases recorded in 2001 down to 35,088 cases in 2011.

However, there has been an increase of 40 per cent in commuting accidents based on figures between 2006 to 2011. There were 17,704 accidents in 2006 and 24,809 in 2011.

He said, more and more

employers and employees understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring hazards at the workplace are identified, assessed and controlled.

He stressed that Occupational Safety and Health are far too important to be ignored because it is a human rights issue and looking after the welfare of the people includes improving the workplace environment and strengthening the morale of the workforce.

"If we create a safe working environment, there will be few or no accidents. The workers will perform productively and they will help to improve the profitability of the company," Lee said.

He was speaking when delivering his keynote speech at the Occupational Safety and Health Awareness Seminar organised by Kim Teck Cheong Sdn Bhd (KTC) here yesterday.

Lee urged various industries to prevent accidents as well as to obey laws such as the OSHA 1994 and the Safety and Health Policy.

"Besides making money, the employees' welfare should be a priority to ensure a positive output of an organisation. If possible, try to avoid accidents from happening as the impact can affect the

business of the organisation as well as the nation's economic development," Lee said.

He said Kim Teck Cheong Sdn Bhd is a good example to other organisations in looking after their employees' well-being.

"NIOSH will assist Kim Teck Cheong in educating their workforce about safety in the workplace by giving occupational safety and health seminars, showing the right way to handle goods in the premises, proper machinery usage and so forth.

"Furthermore, every organisation especially factories need to have a safety management system because of the risky and hazardous working environment.

"Common sense tells us that an effective OSH management not only reduces the risks on occupational safety and health but also ensures high returns to the company in terms of productivity and profitability," he added.

Employees are often regarded by the management to be the most important asset of any organisation and hence they should be protected in terms of health and safety and nurtured to ensure that they continue to be productive, said Lee.

"Whenever accidents happen, losses incur and it affects



The signing ceremony of Kim Teck Cheong's Safety and Health policies. (from left) Lau, Abidin, Lee, Yee and Mariam.

the number of manpower and also the productivity of an organisation," he added.

Lee urged all employers to include authorities such as the Road Safety Department (JKJR) whenever an organisation is promoting a road safety programme.

He reminded them never to take safety for granted and not to cut cost when it concerns safety issues, because when accidents happen, they will also have to pay more to

compensate the workers.

He also urged all the government departments or NGOs and businesses to cooperate with NIOSH to promote safety awareness at the workplace and when commuting to work.

"We should promote the idea to all industries throughout Malaysia and always bear in mind that safety is a good business," he added.

In future, NIOSH will collaborate with the Ministry of

Tourism, Culture and Environment to promote OSH in the hospitality industry to promote a safe environment for tourists and employees alike.

Also present at the event were the Chairman of KTC, Datuk Lau Kok Sing, director of KTC, Dexter Lau, Deputy Chief Minister, Datuk Yee Moh Chai, Kota Kinabalu Mayor, Datuk Abidin Madingkir and director of Sabah SOCSO, Hajah Mariam Haji Hasan.