

NIOSH ready to assist in addressing climate change challenges

By **Bernama** - April 28, 2024 @ 2:48pm



The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) can enhance the effectiveness of awareness and training programmes, provide advisory services, conduct climate change-related research and establish mechanisms to address its impact in the workplace. - NSTP file pic

KUALA LUMPUR: The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is ready to provide advisory and consultation services to assist the government, employers and workers in facing challenges related to climate change.

In a statement today, NIOSH vice-chairman G. Manivanan said the organisation was also upgrading its occupational safety and health (OSH) training programmes held nationwide.

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"All parties need to work together to mitigate the risks faced by workers due to the increasingly noticeable climate change worldwide.

"NIOSH is also actively engaging in collaborations with various external and internal organisations, government agencies as well as public and private higher education

institutions to enhance research and services related to OSH. To date, NIOSH has signed 139 cooperation documents for this purpose," he said.

Through such collaborations, he said NIOSH can enhance the effectiveness of awareness and training programmes, provide advisory services, conduct climate change-related research and establish mechanisms to address its impact in the workplace.

Meanwhile, Manivanan said the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has selected "Ensuring Safety and Health at Work in a Changing Climate" as the theme for this year's World OSH Day celebration, which is observed today.

"According to the ILO study, climate change will expose about 70 per cent of workers worldwide to various hazards such as heat stroke, excessive ultraviolet (UV) radiation, air pollution, vector-borne diseases, and agrochemicals.

"The ILO also estimated that up to 860,000 work-related deaths will occur among outdoor workers each year due to health issues arising from climate change, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, respiratory problems, kidney failure and mental health issues," he said.

The ILO report also highlighted climate change has already impacted 2.4 billion workers exposed to excessive heat, representing over 70 per cent of the total 3.4 billion global workforce.

"In the report titled 'Ensuring Safety and Health at Work in a Changing Climate', the ILO outlines several main impacts of climate change including 1.6 billion workers exposed to UV radiation, with more than 18,960 work-related deaths annually from nonmelanoma skin cancer.

"In addition, 1.6 billion outdoor workers are exposed to air pollution, resulting in over 860,000 work-related deaths annually," he said.— BERNAMA