

# Minimum wage will spur growth

I DO not agree with those who argue that the introduction of the minimum wage scheme would cause inflation to go out of hand.

On the contrary, lowering wages or stagnating them would make workers' lives unbearable and is a sure-fire way to erode the nation's economy and well-being of its citizens.

Industrialists and employers in developing countries are in the habit of bandying around words like efficiency, productivity and competitiveness, in a master design to lower labour costs.

But what do we see on the ground in most of the first world countries? High wages.

If we do not have a minimum wage scheme, employers may be tempted to lower the wages as much as they want in the frightening name of "inflation".

The truth is that the act of lower-

ing wages will trigger our industries to become less efficient, productive and competitive.

High wages are the incentives that propels technical and business innovation and, without them, we would soon become just another low-wage country struggling to eke out an existence.

History tells us that, for instance, in Australia and Argentina around the beginning of last century, were two of the richest countries per capita in the world.

Argentina which opted for a low-wage economy has virtually marked time and presently is behind Australia by over six decades.

So we must ask ourselves: What augurs well for our future and the future of our children?

Using inflation as the whipping boy to stifle wages is just a ruse by employers to enhance

their profiteering and vested interests.

The private lives and well-being of the employees must be balanced against the profiteering by crass merchants.

Should the minimum wage be implemented, it is hoped that employers will not offset their "losses" by increasing the working hours of the employees. This would bring us back to square one.

Should this happen, family life will be disrupted. Spouses will be seeing less of each other and kids will be having a gala time on their own or with friends.

The authorities must oversee the situation in that material gain is not overtaken by family and social priorities.

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