

# FPP BizNewz

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**BUKIT MERAH**  
**"THE RED FOREST"**  
PERMATA TERSEMBUNYI DI JERANTUT

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GRADUATES WHO ARE THE URBAN POOR

# GRADUATES

## WHO ARE THE URBAN POOR



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**D**id you know that even if they are an officers or executives, graduates with a bachelor's degree earn only in between RM1,100 to RM2,200 on average per month? This is a regular scenario that new graduates experience in their professional lives these days. When these students graduate and move out into the real world, they become urban poor, even though they are highly educated. Every year, thousands of graduates are produced in the country however they have added to urban poverty. These graduates' wages are essentially the same as those without a degree or diploma at this moment. In fact, some of them have less than those who have a high school diploma or a certificate. An officer but only earns RM1,100 each month? This means they have entered the hardcore poor group. Even security guard, for example, are paid more than that.

Admittedly urban poverty cannot be measured by income alone. It is measured on the level of local quality of life and amenities. But if the wages are very inadequate, they cannot rent a comfortable house and buy a vehicle. Furthermore, they must contend with the ever-increasing high prices of food and other needs. So, in this condition, how can individual experience a sense of quality of life? Which is remarkable given that grads have been hovering around the same wage price for nearly 30 years. Is that amount of money sufficient, given the rising cost of goods and services? Education loans must also be paid off. This was a concern for most recent graduates.

Despite the government's announcement of numerous job prospects in the Economic Gig, majority of fresh graduates engage in e-hailing services like food delivery, products delivery, and passenger transportation. It is considerably very hard to find a suitable job based on their qualifications because most employers prefer candidates with at least two years of working experience. How long do you think graduates will want to work in this field? In professional domains, we are losing their enthusiasm and skill. It won't finish with "thank goodness they were able to work instead of being unemployed." There are indeed high-skill jobs that are lucrative for freelancer jobs such as engineer,



accountant, graphic designer, programmer, videographer, and others but it is not much and less advertised. Advertisements for experienced workers, on the other hand, mention a pay of RM2,200. Even individuals in high positions earn less than RM3,000 per month. Employers like this are the ones who misunderstand the nature of professionals and undervalue them. The Department of Statistics Malaysia in 2021 reported that most graduates who

entered the job market in 2020 received an estimated monthly salary of between RM1,001 to RM1,500 compared to RM2,001 to RM2,500 in 2019. The department also reported, the rate of skills-related underemployment, which forces graduates to work as low-skilled workers, grew from 32.7 percent in the first quarter of 2017 to 36.8 percent in the third quarter of 2020.

The government has authorized a new minimum wage rate of RM1,500 per month, which had taken effect on May 1 across the country. It is hoped that this implementation will improve the salaries of graduates and professionals. A failed wage system for graduates also dragged down failure to the country's education system. After all, we believe that higher education can help people get out of poverty, but the truth is that every year, graduates from the universities become urban poor. If this trend continues, graduation salaries would likely linger around RM1,500 in the next 30 years. Despite our pursuit of various changes for advancement, it appears that we are stuck in the ancient period when it comes to pay problems. We are happy to have a large number of graduates in a variety of professions. Children from rural areas typically dominate local universities, yet their pride eventually leads to their becoming urban poor.



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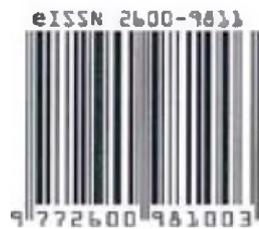
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