

PSP calls out the Straits Times for “misleading interpretation” of ASG Francis Yuen in wage debate

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The party said that its assistant secretary-general did not "say or allude to PSP being against minimum wage".

The Progress Singapore Party has called out The Straits Times for misinterpreting and misquoting their Assistant Secretary General (ASG) Francis Yuen's comments on minimum wage.

In a Straits Times online report on Thursday (Oct 22), an article was published on an online forum, organized by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) on three political parties' perspectives on minimum wage, gender equality and party leadership succession.

In it, they wrote: "Progress Singapore Party is also against the WP proposal.

Its assistant secretary-general, Mr Francis Yuen, said wages are just one part of overall business costs, and the key is to raise productivity and reduce over-reliance on foreign workers.

"It should not be a system where foreign workers are brought in because they are cheap, and, therefore, it's expedient for a business to lower its cost based on the fact that they are much cheaper."

In a statement today, the Progress Singapore Party (PSP) said that The Straits Times had put out a "misleading interpretation" of what was said.

It added that their ASG Francis Yuen did not "say or allude to PSP being against minimum wage".

A PSP spokesperson said: "We refer to Straits Times article on the IPS forum published this morning 23rd October 2010. In the report, our ASG Mr Yuen was quoted to be against WP's proposal for minimum wage. This is not true and is a misleading interpretation of what was said. Our ASG did not say or allude to PSP being against minimum wage.

"The thrust of his comments is minimum wage will not drive up business cost as wages is not the only component that make up business costs. Furthermore, businesses should leverage on productivity to defray any increase in wages", the spokesperson said.

According to PSP's PowerPoint slides presented at the IPS forum, minimum living wage was listed as one of their beliefs.

"Although it is not exactly the same as minimum wage, the spirit of raising the level of low wages is the same. The slide is attached for your reference", the spokesperson added