Midweek polls will hit productivity, say employers

[Nurul Azwa Aris](#)
| April 10, 2018

MEF executive director Shamsuddin Bardan says employers are however bound by law to allow their staff time off to vote.

MEF chief Shamsuddin Bardan says, under the law, employers can be fined RM500 or face up to 6 months jail if they deny their employees' right to vote.

PETALING JAYA: Having the 14th general election (GE14) in the middle of the week will definitely affect productivity in companies, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) said today.

MEF executive director Shamsuddin Bardan said employees would need a few hours off to vote in places near their homes or a full day off for those who need to travel to another town to cast their ballots.

The Election Commission announced today that nominations would be held on Saturday, April 28, and polling on Wednesday, May 9.

"Having a number of employees applying for a day off or even applying for annual leave, could see productivity losses of up to 30%," he told FMT.

Shamsuddin added that the employees cannot be stopped from casting their votes and the employers must allow them to cast the ballots.

"The law states that employees have the right to cast their ballot on polling day."

He cited the Election Offences Act 1954, where employers are obliged to allow their employees a reasonable period of paid time-off for voting.

Under the law, any employer who refuses voters their right shall be liable to a fine of RM500 or to imprisonment for six months.

Meanwhile, National Parent-Teacher Association Consultative Council (PIBGN) chairman Mohamad Ali Hassan said the election date being a weekday is not an issue.

"The education minister has announced that schools will be closed, so there should not be any problem for schoolchildren," he said, referring to the use of schools as polling centres.

Following the announcement that the GE14 polling date will fall on a weekday, Education Minister Mahdzir Khalid said that all schools in the country will be given a "special event" holiday on polling day.