

# MEF warns workers not to demand more

MALAYSIANS have been advised to “remain sober” and not to demand salary increments as this may add further pressure on businesses.

This call comes from Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Shamsudin Bardan, who also said MEF members had no plan to introduce any new allowance, such as a cost of living allowance, for employees.

He said if people were going to demand an increase in salaries, some companies may even have to retrench some of their workers.

“Times are bad and this will have an effect on the level of our competitiveness in the world market, leading to further problems.

By PEARL LEE

“Businesses are trying to be as competitive as possible to keep people in employment. The government should assist the private sector to maintain its competitiveness in the market.”

Although the priority of the business sector is to make profit, the current hike in petrol price, as well as plans to review the electricity tariffs, would have an overall effect on businesses, he added.

Shamsudin also said he felt the government “made a mistake” with its sudden announcement to increase the prices of petrol by RM0.78 sen a litre and diesel by RM1 a litre.

“The people had no time

to envisage what they were going to face before the announcement was made.”

The increase in price “is akin to a tsunami that came without any warning”.

He said the workers’ salaries would be reviewed in the usual way, when the existing collective agreements expire.

Meanwhile, National Union of Bank Employees general secretary J. Solomon urged MEF to come out with ideas and help the people to ease their hardship over higher prices, and also to assist the government in facing this challenge.

MEF should take a proactive stand to help the government, not just claiming to support it in good times, he added.