

# MEF lauds labour law amendments

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**PETALING JAYA:** The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has lauded Human Resource Ministry's proposed amendments to the labour laws, especially on increasing flexibility in work hours.

In a statement, MEF executive director Shamsuddin Bardan said flexible work hours will better cater to individual employees' needs and create a more conducive business environment.

"Malaysia needs to adopt more progressive and flexible labour legislation. Many countries, including our Asean neighbours, have already reviewed their labour laws to attract investments," Shamsuddin said.

"Now, a new provision proposed in the Employment Act 1955 will allow employees to plan their

work around flexi-hours and work-from-home programmes."

He was also pleased with the outcome of the ministry's review on outdated labour laws. He feels it will address many issues caused by the rigid legislation, especially in the current challenging economic climate.

"We think it has met most of its objectives. It gives employers better governance while moving towards self-regulation. This will produce more competent human capital. In turn, this will enhance the country's ability to compete.

"As we had proposed, wages payment will be expanded to cooperative societies besides bank accounts. This will help solidify the country's cooperative movement.

"Since early this decade, we have called for changes to the inflexible and overprescriptive

labour legislation that can impede the nation's productivity and competitiveness," he added.

Such changes are needed as the economic focus has changed from the manufacturing to the services industry. The gross domestic product (GDP) breakdown is 61 per cent by the service sector followed by 29 per cent for the manufacturing sector.

The Human Resources Ministry recently announced the intention to amend three major labour laws as an effort to keep abreast with labour management needs. Among Acts to be amended are the Industrial Relations Act 1967, Trade Union Act 1959 and Employment Act 1955.

MTUC secretary-general G. Rajasekaran reportedly responded that the proposed amendments to these labour laws would make the system even more archaic.