

Less taxing year

Some workers to enjoy more goodies

By **M. KRISHNAMOORTHY**
krishna@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Amid the gloomy economic climate, taxpayers will still have a reason to smile when filing their 2008 tax returns.

Employees will enjoy more goodies in the form of new tax exemptions for a host of things, as announced in the Budget 2009.

Taxpayers who receive petrol, parking and travelling allowances can now claim tax relief of up to RM6,000 a year.

Parents can also claim up to RM2,400 a year for childcare fees, while exemptions are also provided for telephone and handphone, pager, Personal Data Assistant (PDA) and Internet subscriptions.

Those claiming for medical benefits could also enjoy tax relief for maternity expenses and buying and seeking

»Parents can now send their children to childcare centres«

SHAMSUDDIN BARDAN

traditional medicines and services respectively. They include ayurvedic and acupuncture treatments.

In welcoming the implementation of the additional tax exemptions, Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) said some of the additional exemptions would help ease the

financial burden of employees.

MEF executive director Shamsuddin Bardan said: "We in the private sector have been proposing for the childcare allowance for a long time and we thank the Government for finally it is here.

"Parents can now send their children to childcare centres."

"By doing so, they don't have to hire foreign maids and there are some 320,000 foreign maids in the country. This move will help reduce our dependence on foreign workers in the country," he said.

Tax consultant Datuk Dr V. Shanmuganathan said the tax exemptions was a step in the right direction because of the imminent economic slowdown.

"It is good to allow a variety of tax breaks that will help taxpayers overcome the pressure of price increases," he said.

TAX EXEMPTIONS

Some of the exemptions taxpayers can claim when filing the 2008 returns



▶ Petrol allowance or travelling allowance between home and work place up to RM2,400 a year; petrol card or petrol allowance or travel allowance. Toll fees and petrol allowance for official duties up to RM6,000 a year; and allowance or fees for parking.



▶ Meal allowance and allowance for childcare of up to RM2,400 a year.



▶ Telephone and mobile phone, telephone bills exceeding RM300, pager, Personal Data Assistant (PDA) and Internet subscription.



▶ Subsidies on interest on loans totaling up to RM300,000 for housing, passenger motor vehicles and education.



▶ Medical benefits exemptions include expenses on maternity and traditional medicines such as ayurvedic and acupuncture.

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