

Even skilled workers not spared retrenchment

PETALING JAYA: The facts are sobering. Skilled workers are among the top category of employees retrenched in the past two years.

More than half of those who lost their jobs in 2015 and 2016 were skilled workers.

In 2015, 65% of those who were retrenched were skilled workers. The rate last year dipped only slightly.

Among them were plant and machine operators and assemblers, managers and technicians.

Statistics from the Human Resources Ministry showed that 11,910 plant and machine operators, and assemblers were retrenched last year.

This was followed by professionals, managers, technicians and associate professionals.

Others included skilled workers in agriculture, forestry, livestock, and craft and trade.

They were among the 37,699 people who were retrenched last year.

In 2015, 17,379 managers got the boot. Others included plant and machine operators and assemblers (4,213), technicians and associate professionals (3,926) and professionals (3,812).

The total number of people who lost their jobs in 2015 was 38,499. This, however, excluded the retrenchment exercise of Malaysia Airlines that year.

Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan, however, maintained that the retrenchment fig-

ure for last year was higher than the 37,699 provided by the ministry.

"It can be slightly misleading because under the Employment Act, companies are not required to report if they retrench only fewer than six people.

"There are some companies that retrench fewer than six people so the numbers are higher," he said, adding that this could happen in smaller outlets in shopping complexes.

Shamsuddin also believed there were some companies which did not report layoffs to the ministry although they were compelled by law to do so.

He said "disruptive technology" could also affect employment as many companies adopt automation and new technologies which did not require much manpower.

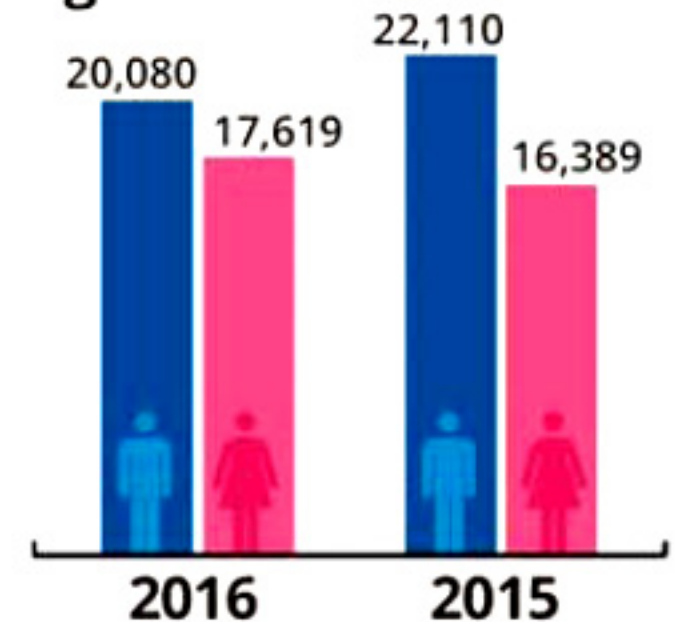
Shamsuddin said creating jobs in these "challenging times" could be an uphill task.

Last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced the Employment Insurance System (EIS) as a safety net for about 6.5 million employees in the private sector.

The EIS, which is meant to help workers cope in a demanding labour market, will start next year.

Affected employees can get temporary financial aid besides help in looking for new employment through a job-seeking programme.

Retrenchment according to gender:



Retrenchment by state:

State	2016	2015
Penang	12,313	1,102
Kuala Lumpur (FT)	11,167	18,530
Negeri Sembilan	4,135	779
Johor	3,481	1,109
Selangor	2,891	12,858
Perak	1,006	587
Terengganu	628	627
Sabah	584	508
Sarawak	446	127
Pahang	391	1,322
Malacca	273	427
Labuan (FT)	265	153
Kedah	82	135
Kelantan	22	128
Putrajaya (FT)	8	63
Perlis	7	44