

Pemerksa a much-needed lifeline for employers, says MEF

NATION

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PETALING JAYA: The RM20bil People and Economic Strategic Empowerment Programme (Pemerksa) stimulus package provides employers with a lifeline, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) said.

In thanking the government for Pemerksa, MEF president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said Pemerksa offers much-needed relief to businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Pemerksa targets 400,000 employees and 37,000 employers, as well as addressing the needs of gig workers, SMEs and micro-enterprises and entrepreneurs.

“Employers in the most affected sectors such as tourism, retail and wholesale should be able to breathe easier with the provision of RM700mil to extend the Wage Subsidy Programme 3.0 for three months,” he said on Friday (March 19).

Syed said he is pleased that the Penjana Kerjaya 2.0 initiative under Socso had been expanded to include 60,000 temporary and gig workers, while the Prihatin Special Grant 3.0 initiative would assist local SMEs and micro-enterprises to restart operations.

“The existing micro-credit financing through programmes under Bank Simpanan Nasional, Tekun Nasional, Mara and SME Corp also received an additional top-up of RM500mil.

“We thank the government for providing the necessary assistance under Pemerksa to revive and revitalise our national economy. This support is very critical to most employers during these exceptionally challenging times,” he said.

Syed added that employers are able to contribute to the government's call for economic reforms by playing a role in offering employment to underemployed and unemployed graduates.

With disruptions and delays caused by the Covid-19 situation, Syed expected the number of new graduates produced this year could double to about one million.

He said employers should be able to absorb 30% of the new graduates and with continuous government support, perhaps a further 20%.

"We could train them in industry needs such as IR 4.0 skills training and apprenticeship programmes," he said, adding that another 30% could be hired by new industries or investments and the remaining 20% could be trained to become entrepreneurs.