

## Ministry not proactive in dealing with employer- employee disputes: MEF

KEERTAN AYAMANY(/TAG/-/META/KEERTAN-AYAMANY) / 23 APR 2020 / 10:49 H.



**PETALING JAYA:** Employers and employees have totally disparate views on the extent of the Human Resources Ministry's responsibility when dealing with job losses stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) said the ministry has been slow to respond to concerns and has not been proactive in dealing with disputes between employers and their workers.

On the other hand, the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) is adamant that the responsibility of maintaining jobs lies not with the government but with the employers.

MEF executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan (*pix*) said the ministry should have set more guidelines to settle disputes between employers and employees.

"For instance, they could have set rules and regulations on the quantum of a pay cut based on the company's financial position," he told *theSun* yesterday.

"But I see no such thing from the ministry, and this has caused more conflict. It has left it to employers and employees to settle such disputes to avoid offending any party."

Shamsuddin said the ministry should have come up with solutions for employers before announcing that they must pay full salary during the movement control order (MCO).

"We have received reports of employees refusing to go to work, even though their employer had received government approval to operate during the MCO.

“Their rationale is that there is no need to go to work when the government has declared that they can stay home and still get paid in full,” he said.

“The government’s announcement is irresponsible,” he added.

Shamsuddin maintained that employers care about saving jobs but they lack the capacity to do so and are frustrated with the government’s response.

However, MTUC president Datuk Abdul Halim Mansor said the government had provided enough aid to employers with the RM260 billion economic stimulus package.

“During the MCO, the employers are responsible for the loss of jobs, not the government,” he said.

“MTUC is disappointed with employers who have behaved irresponsibly despite (receiving help through) the RM260 billion economic stimulus package announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.”

“Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri M. Saravanan is required to abide by the requirements outlined by the prime minister, and has acted accordingly,” he told *theSun* yesterday.

Abdul Halim said MTUC was shocked to hear the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers president Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai’s announcement that employers would be taking action such as layoffs, pay cuts or reducing employee benefits.

“We have received reports of workers being laid off without pay or benefits. The government should warn employers’ associations and assert its stand and support for everyone affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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