

MEDIA RELEASE

Make errant employers pay, says MEF

PETALING JAYA: MEF President Dato' Dr Syed Hussain Syed Human J.P. has called for errant employers found flaunting the Covid-19 regulations and SOPs to be hauled up and brought to book.

"As responsible employers, we make sure that our workplaces are safe and secure by sanitizing the premises, implementing the necessary SOPs, and providing time-off to employees for screening and inoculation. We work closely with the government and the community so that we win the battle against Covid-19," he said today.

"But some of the errant employers continue to flaunt the laws and regulations without having any regard to the health and safety of their employees or the public.

"We had received many comments from the enforcement units and the public that employers are stubborn and do not follow the SOPs.

"These small group of (errant) employers are giving employers in general a very bad image, and they deserve to be punished.

"We must take serious action as the image of employers needs to be protected."

He said the government would also want to revisit some of the penalties imposed on such employers for breach of compliance with SOPs as further deterrent.

Currently, under the Emergency (Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021, companies or corporations that violate the SOPs can be fined up to RM50,000.

"We urge the government to look into this as the penalties that are being imposed seem to not produce the desired results and ineffective to deter these employers," said Dato' Dr Syed Hussain.

"The penalties imposed must be able to effectively deter the recalcitrant employers especially the repeat offenders, and not merely just a slap on the wrist.

"As MEF, we advise our members to strictly abide by all the laws and support all the SOPs to contain the spread of Covid-19.

"We believe all trade associations also support the government to ensure the SOPs are followed and to educate their members, and for these reasons we believe a large part of these errant employers are not members of any association.

“These employers ranging from SMEs to large local corporations that do not belong to any association need to be looked at closer.

“In addition, we need to put an end to the illegal business operators utilising undocumented foreign workers to run their operations as this has become a big problem for Malaysia internationally.

“We believe our enforcement units are doing a good job but they are overwhelmed and require more manpower to cover a wide area.

“The government must be able to show that serious efforts are being made to eradicate forced labour by setting up a special unit to track and find these employers.”

He said MEF supports all government efforts especially those in the enforcement team including the Ministry of Human Resources and the PDRM.

“We need to be firm with those with a flagrant attitude towards the pandemic.

“Only by doing so can we bring down the number of daily infections and punish those who break the law.

“And as for the majority of the employers that have complied with the SOPs in the affected areas, they should be allowed to operate their businesses.

“The government could also look at incentivising employers who maintain a clean record on SOPs to fight this pandemic such as additional tax breaks for good governance,” he added.

For further information, contact the MEF Secretariat at 03-7955-7778 or fax 03-7955-9008 or email mef-hq@mef.org.my.

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