

MEDIA RELEASE**MEF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONFERENCE 2022 Amendments to labour laws ushering in ‘New Era of Employment’**

PETALING JAYA: The latest amendments to labour legislations were the highlight of the MEF Industrial Relations Conference 2022 that was held at the M-Hotel and online today and tomorrow.

In his welcome address, MEF President Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman PJN J.P. said the theme for this year’s IR Conference – ‘The New Era of Employment’ – exudes the transformation of Malaysia’s labour landscape.

“The amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1967 have far-reaching implications on our industrial relations. Following the Parliament’s approval of amendments to the various labour legislations, employers must be well prepared so that we can respond effectively to the new environment,” said Datuk Dr Syed Hussain.

“For example, under the amended Industrial relations Act, dismissal cases that are not resolved at the conciliation level are now automatically referred by the DGIR to the Industrial Court without the need to first notify the Minister.

“The introduction of an appeal process allows parties to challenge the Industrial Court's decision on its substantive merits instead of only via judicial review previously.

“Besides the amendments to the IRA, there are also sweeping changes following the amendments to the Employment Act 1955 and the Trade Unions Act 1959.”

He said MEF aims to ensure continuous harmonious industrial relations in a constantly changing environment and the amendments to legislations are significantly important for IR and HR practitioners.

“Besides the additional costs and burden during this critical recovery period, it is also important that the government provide employers with a clearer directions and guidelines to help businesses grow in challenging times.

“As MEF, we have an important role to ensure that our labour laws and regulations address the requirements of the private sector employers and employees for the current and future world of work.”

The two-day conference, which attracted more than 250 participants representing industry leaders, human resources and industrial relations practitioners, addressed specific areas of forced labour, trade union recognition, gig workers, sexual

harassment at the workplace, and managing probationers and the proposed amendments to the Trade Unions Act 1959.

The speakers featured in the Conference were Mr. Sivabalah Nadarajah of Shearn Delamore & Co.; Dato' Ambiga Sreenevasan, Prominent Malaysian Lawyer and Human Rights Advocate; Ms Wong Keat Ching of Zul Rafique & Partners; Mr Peter Iruthayaraj, Former Industrial Court Chairman; and Mr. Shariffullah Majeed of Lee Hishammuddin Allen & Gledhill.

The Conference, in addition, featured Mr T. Shanmugam of Department of Labour, Peninsular Malaysia; Prof. Dr. Nik Ahmad Kamal Nik Mahmud, Former IIUM Lecturer; Encik Shahrizan Yusri of Petronas; Puan Nazatulisma bt Che Hassan, Department of Trade Union Affairs; Mr. A. Balasubramaniam of MTUC; and Puan Zainab bt Kamar of Industrial Relations Department; as Panelists of the two-day event.

Datuk Dr Syed Hussain also launched the latest MEF industrial relations publication on 'Probationers and the Law' which was handed complimentary to all the face-to-face conference participants.

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

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