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MTUC: Lavish lifestyle must be stopped

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The lavish lifestyle of the rich and famous in the country must be stopped immediately, the Malaysian Trades Union Congress today said.

The MTUC also said that managements of corporations should be prepared to share their profits equitably with their workers so that everyone has a fair and equal "slice of the cake".

In a Press release today, MTUC president Zainal Rampak said while supporting the Government in its austerity drive, the MTUC would also like employers, especially the corporate captains, to follow the precedent set by the Government by "trimming the fat" off their annual management allowances.

He said the MTUC accorded full support for the Government's cost-cutting measures aimed at sustaining economic resilience in the light of a 40 per cent depreciation of the ringgit against the US dollar.

Zainal said the Government should, at the same time, give due attention to the interests of the low and middle income groups who make up the majority of the population in the country.

"More than 95 per cent of our 8.5 million workers belong to these income groups, and their long-term interests and welfare should be accorded every possible attention even during difficult times such as now," he said.

The MTUC said the 18 per cent reduction in Federal expenditure would in a big way boost domestic savings while the deferment of several mega projects would also firm up financial stability.

"It is laudable that the Deputy Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim) is taking the lead by implementing reductions to the salaries of Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and other Government leaders. There should be a complete freeze on fully paid family overseas holidays, golf club activities, entertainment at expensive hotels and restaurants and related peripheral and non-productive activities," Zainal said.

Meanwhile, Cuepacs has urged the Government to reconsider its move to freeze the annual salary increment for Groups A and B civil servants.

Making the call, Cuepacs Deputy Secretary-General Abdul Rahman Manan said the freeze would have an effect on the pension rates of civil servants.

"If there is no increment, civil servants particularly those retiring in a year or two will not attain the maximum and this will reduce the pension they will receive," he said.

He said the Cuepacs Council would meet on Sunday to discuss at length the Government's move to freeze increment and would study it from the legal angle.

"We are nevertheless confident that the Government will take into account the problems faced by civil servants and resolve it amicably," Rahman said.

Meanwhile, the Telugu Association of Malaysia today said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and the Cabinet had the undivided support of the association.

"We back all the tight budgetary controls to correct the situation. We also pray for the fast recovery of our economy," association president B. A. Nokiah said.

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