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MTUC URGES PRIVATE SECTOR TO OBSERVE HOLIDAY ON POLLING DAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 23 (Bernama) -- Some employers are not prepared to grant their workers a paid holiday on polling day on Monday which has been declared a public holiday by the government, the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) said today.

Its president, Senator Zainal Rampak, said the MTUC had been informed that instead of granting a paid holiday, the employers were giving their workers time off to cast their votes and to return to work.

"This is grossly unfair to those voters who have registered in their hometowns but are working very far away from their respective voting centres," he said in a statement.

Zainal asked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to issue a firm directive to the private sector to grant workers a paid holiday on Monday.

He said the prime minister had repeatedly called on voters to exercise their right of franchise and had urged all registered voters to go to their respective voting centres on polling day and cast their votes.

By denying their workers a paid holiday on polling day, these employers were actually preventing their workers from exercising their right of franchise, a fundamental right of citizens guaranteed under the Federal Constitution, he said.

"Democracy will become meaningless when employers are not prepared to allow their workers to exercise their right to vote. We call upon these employers to think and act like responsible corporate citizens," he said.

Zainal said companies' profit margin would not be hurt if they grant paid holiday to their workers once every five years to cast their votes.

-- BERNAMA

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