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Najib urged to intervene in MAS retrenchment

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PETALING JAYA: Employee unions have banded together to call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak to intervene in Malaysia Airlines' (MAS) restructuring which will see about 6,000 workers being retrenched.

International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), National Union of Flight Attendants Malaysia (Nufam), and Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC), are among those who jointly sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office on the issue.

Other unions showing solidarity with MAS workers include Tenaga Nasional Berhad Junior Officers Union (TNBJOU), United Malaysia Labour Centre (UMLC) and Public Services International.

Nufam president Ismail Nasaruddin demanded that Khazanah Nasional Berhad, which owns 70% of shares in MAS and is overseeing restructuring operations, to consult with MAS in-house unions, and threatened to picket if this was not done before downsizing starts in June.

"We will object to any termination letters and will picket if they do not consult us about the restructuring exercise.

"We hope the prime minister will pay attention to the issues MAS workers are facing. It is not our intention to picket and oppose the government. We only want open and harmonious discussions," Ismail said.

Most unions fear that those retrenched will be unable to get work due to age.