

MTUC: Minister should quash new Maybank union registration
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

PETALING JAYA, Sept 21 — The Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) today called on the government to quash the registration of a new Maybank union, saying that its employees were already represented by the National Union of Bank Employees (NUBE).

MTUC president Khalid Atan said Human Resource Minister Datuk Dr S. Subramaniam had the power to overrule the registration of the Maybank Non-Executive Union (Mayneu) as a new in-house union.

“The human resource minister can overrule the decision of the registrar, he can still act.

“Once a union exists, no other union should represent the employees,” Khalid told reporters at a news conference here.

The 50-year-old NUBE is representing some 5,000 Maybank workers who have been locked in a dispute with their employer since June 2009 over bonus claims and the legality of an in-house union for non-executive personnel.

NUBE accused Maybank today of backing the new union to dodge an 80-month bonus claim.

This came after Maybank chief executive Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar said yesterday that the country’s biggest lender respected the right of employees to choose whether to be represented by in-house or industry unions.

He said 61 per cent of Maybank employees in the clerical/non-clerical category are NUBE members but others decided to form Mayneu on January 3.

NUBE secretary-general J. Solomon, who was also present alongside Khalid, claimed that by allowing Mayneu to function, Abdul Wahid had violated an agreement with NUBE.

“We are the sole representatives of Maybank’s employees. Wahid cannot violate his own agreement,” Solomon said.

Solomon said earlier in a statement that Abdul Wahid’s comment “was meant to mislead employees and the public” while ignoring “its obligation to NUBE” to resolve the bonus claim.

He added that Maybank’s “blatant support of the in-house union” was a violation of a High Court stay order on the registration of Mayneu.

NUBE has been locked in a dispute with Maybank over bonuses since June 2009 and is seeking 80 months’ pay for its members which it says is the same received by the bank’s management over the last 10 years.

But Abdul Wahid said yesterday NUBE members were governed by the union’s collective agreement which stipulated a two-month annual contractual bonus.

He said NUBE did not agree to a performance-based variable bonus and so the union cannot demand payment over and above what was negotiated and agreed to.

Two weeks ago, the union pressed their case when 50 of its members picketed outside Maybank headquarters to coincide with a visit by Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

The union, which has about 30,000 members, also alleged that the prime minister had failed to resolve issues affecting bank employees, in particular those in Maybank.

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