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MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE

IT'S MORE THAN JUST PROFIT AND LOSS

THE Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has stated that the three-day paternity leave proposed by the Human Resources Ministry, to be funded by employers, will cost companies RM157.2 million or RM 52.4 million a day.

MEF executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan has suggested for the cost of such leave to be borne by the Social Security Organisation (Socso) or the Employment Insurance System (EIS).

While the approach is used in other countries, the question is whether Socso or EIS has enough funds to undertake the task.

Could MEF enlighten the public on the methodology it used to calculate the losses?

There has not been an increase in Socso contribution over

the years. It is vital for the government, employers and unions to review the feasibility of using Socso and EIS to finance paternity and maternity leave, and whether contributions should be increased.

The fundamental questions are, why is there a need for a duration of paternity and maternity leave, and how is it related to modern employment?

Does allowing the father and mother to bond with their baby create stronger families and lead to retention of talent and improved productivity?

Fatherhood and motherhood are not mutually exclusive activities from employment.

Many talented mothers and fathers are willing to contribute to organisations that provide a work-life balance.

Employers who want paternity or maternity leave to form a crucial part of talent pool and retain this talent must strengthen its human touch.

Productivity, in the long term, is about creating the right conditions for the development of human capital in terms of attracting diverse talents.

Attracting a variety of talent with diverse needs is crucial for organisational survival in a competitive economic environment.

Therefore, it is vital for MEF to comprehend paternity and maternity leave from a broader perspective of human capital development, instead of narrowing it down to profit and loss.

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