

# Malaysia: PSM leaders report fruitful engagement with Saravanan on workers' issues

Thursday 11 June 2020, by [VENGADESAN Martin](#) (Date first published: 6 June 2020).

**The Workers Bureau of Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) said it held a fruitful meeting with Human Resources Minister M Saravanan at his Putrajaya office yesterday, during which a number of important workers rights issues were discussed.**

"It was a good meeting," PSM deputy chairperson S Arutchelvan told *Malaysiakini*.

"We raised 12 issues, including some current pressing issues on job losses and safeguards. The minister has directed the director-general of the Labour Department to deal with some of them. And on some other matters that need legal opinions, etc, we requested more time," he said.

Aside from Saravanan, director-general of Labour Mohd Jeffrey Joakim of the Department of Labour Peninsular Malaysia, Socso's head of Employment Services Gayathri Vadivel and former Senator T Chandra Mohan, who is now attached to Saravanan's office, were also present.

PSM was represented by Arutchelvan, Workers Bureau chief M Sivaranjani, honorary treasurer Soh Sook Hwa, and liaison officers V Selvam and Danial Hakeem Azman.

During the one-hour meeting, PSM brought up 12 issues affecting the workers that were related to the current movement control order in place to combat the Covid 19 outbreak.

These included workers' claims, those serving in government hospitals, farmworkers' housing issues, foreign workers' settlements and other matters.

Also raised was the [arrest](#) and [charging](#) of the National Union of Workers in Hospital Support and Allied Services (NUWHSAS) executive secretary M Saraswathy and four others for protesting against employer Edgenta UEMS for union-busting outside the Raja Permaisuri Bainun Hospital in Ipoh on Tuesday.

"We asked the minister to stop the union-busting and highlighted that Edgenta UEMS is a government-linked company (GLC). He directed his officer, Chandra Mohan, to look into this and hold follow-up meetings on it," Arutchelvan said.

PSM also submitted two key documents, one on "Towards A Comprehensive National Policy on Labour Migration for Malaysia", which was published by the Migrant Workers' Right to Redress Coalition in July 2017, and the "National Strategy Paper to Ensure the Well-Being of the People post-Covid-19", which the party had prepared and presented to Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin in April 2020.

Arutchelvan said he was encouraged when Gayathri pointed out that there was now more

transparency in applications made on the behalf of workers.

He also added that PSM was given assurances that those workers who were forced to sign documents by their bosses could appeal to the HR Ministry on the matter afterwards.

Other issues discussed included invalid salary deductions by employers during the MCO - essentially forcing their workers to take unpaid leave in violation of government directives.

According to PSM, Saravanan also said that he would refer all such cases to the Industrial Court, in keeping with the policy of the previous administration, but that in the event of there being too many job dismissal disputes, he would form a task force to try to resolve cases out of court, through a negotiation process.

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### **Martin Vengadesan**

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