PETALING JAYA, Jan 2 (Sin Chew Daily) -- Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said 2018 is going to be another challenging year, and he expected more than 50,000 people to lose their jobs this year.

He said during an interview with *Sin Chew Daily* that the retrenchment trend over the past few years would continue into 2018.

He added that this year would be more challenging than 2017 because employers would have to bear higher operating cost, including the newly implemented Employment Insurance Scheme (EIS) and foreign worker levy, along with the minimum wage scheme to be reviewed later this year in July.

"These factors will force employers to tighten their cost management by laying off workers, while some may reduce their workforce dependence by adopting new technologies and techniques.

"Additionally, due to the EIS, employers are more prepared to accept their companies' retrenchment plans."

Shamsuddin expected the banking, insurance, services, manufacturing and construction sectors to be the hardest hit while the plantation industry would be relatively stable.