

## Bank staff to continue with picket

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The National Union of Bank Employees (NUBE) will continue to picket in front of banks for months or even a year until they give members their due right, said union general secretary J. Solomon.

Today, the union is organising a national picket of 10,000 members in front of Menara Maybank here to show its disappointment over the deadlock in its collective agreement dispute.

Solomon said the union had asked for a 30% wage increase and a cost of living allowance for the workers, and the banks agreed to the 30% pay rise provided they do away with the two months' contractual bonus.

"This is the first time that banks are trying to take away what little we have," he said yesterday at a press conference.

He said the union was in favour of the banks introducing performance bonuses in addition to contractual bonuses but not for the former to replace the latter.

NUBE is the union for the lowest category of bank workers comprising clerical and non-clerical staff and their wages start at RM662 per month (non-clerical) and RM995

(clerical).

Solomon pointed out that even a clerk in the government sector was paid higher, with a minimum salary of RM1,300.

He stressed that members needed the pay rise so that their standard of living could go up, adding that the lower-income group spent their money in the country.

"Bank executives and management are paid RM10,000, RM15,000 or RM20,000 a month and bonuses of 10 to 15 months, and they are the ones who spend their money abroad," he said.

Solomon pointed out that during the 1997 financial crisis, NUBE got members to agree to forgo their salary increment and bonuses to help the banks through the difficult times.

He said now that the banks had recovered financially and were reaping billions in profit, they had forgotten the sacrifice made by their workers.

Solomon said today's picket would be directed at Maybank because it was the premier bank in the country and had made RM5.7bil in profit, and it was also a member of the Malayan Commercial Banks Association.