

# Threats won't work — PM

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KUCHING, Sat. — The Prime Minister today warned that the Government will not be subjected to threats by any group, including Cuepacs and the five NJCs (Staff side), to withdraw support for the Barisan Nasional if civil servants' pay claims are not met by Jan 1.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad criticised Cuepacs and the five NJCs for wanting "to fill their own pockets" without realising that the Government's role was to ensure equitable distribution of the country's wealth.

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By **SABRY SHARIF**

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"It is the Government's duty to ensure that every sector gets a fair share of the country's wealth and not just one particular group," he added.

"The Government cannot and will not succumb to the threats by Cuepacs and the five NJCs (Staff side)," he told newsmen at the international airport before leaving for Kuala Lumpur at the end of his four-day State visit.

Cuepacs president and co-ordinating chairman of the five NJCs (Staff side) Ahmad Nor had warned the Government early this month that they would be forced to withdraw support for the Barisan Nasional if the pay claims of the

civil servants were not met by Jan 1.

He also warned that Cuepacs and the five NJCs would be forced to launch a nationwide strike if the Government ignored the Jan 1 deadline.

Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin had also told leaders of Cuepacs and the five NJCs when he met them on Aug 15 that they would be held responsible if they implemented their threats either to withdraw support for the Barisan Nasional or to launch the nationwide strike.

Yesterday, Public Enterprises Minister Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz said the recent actions by Cuepacs and the five NJCs, with regard to their pay claims, had led the outside world to have the impression that the country was in a state of confusion and chaos.

The Prime Minister said that if the Government acceded to the demands of Cuepacs and the five NJCs it would be an "irreversible" and dangerous precedent which the Government might later be powerless to stop.

He said if the Government gave in to the threats every group in this country would issue

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■ I am happy with Taib, says PM  
■ Dr M on MCA

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threats to force the Government to entertain their interests.

"There will not be an end to this problem and inevitably the people, especially the poor, will suffer as the nation's wealth which should benefit all will be diverted to feed the interests of only one group."

The Prime Minister also said it would be morally wrong for the Government to use the nation's wealth to give in to Cuepacs and the five NJCs' pay demands just "to ensure that the Barisan Nasional survived at the polls."

He said the Government was aware of the rights of Cuepacs and the five NJCs to fight for the civil servants.

Civil servants, like any other citizens in the nation, had the right to vote in or out the Barisan Nasional Government.