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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 17/ (BERNAMA) -- THE MUCH-TALKED-ABOUT PROPOSED MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD AND CUEPACS AND THE FIVE NATIONAL JOINT COUNCILS HAS STILL NOT BEEN FIXED DESPITE REPORTS SAYING THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE END OF THE MONTH, ACCORDING TO SOURCES.

SOURCES IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT TOLD BERNAMA TODAY THE DEPARTMENT HAD STILL NOT RECEIVED ANY INDICATION FROM DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD THAT HE IS WILLING TO HAVE SUCH A MEETING.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR IS IN NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS, ATTENDING THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (CHOGM). HE IS EXPECTED TO RETURN NEXT MONDAY.

PRESS REPORTS TODAY QUOTED ACTING PRIME MINISTER DATUK MUSA HITAM AS SAYING THE GOVERNMENT AGREED TO HAVE THE MEETING BUT POINTING OUT THAT IT WOULD NOT BE NEGOTIATIONS BUT JUST TALKS AND OPEN DISCUSSIONS.

CUEPACS PRESIDENT ENCIK AHMAD NOR SAID YESTERDAY CUEPACS AND THE FIVE NJCS WOULD GO ON WITH THE PLANNED NATIONWIDE OCT 23 PICKET TO BACK WAGE CLAIMS FOR CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY ASSURANCES FROM THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE PROPOSED MEETING. -- MORE

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MEANWHILE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDERS, DATUK AHMAD ARSHAD, SAID THAT IF THERE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN CUEPACS AND THE PRIME MINISTER, IT WAS +ENCOURAGING NEWS+ AND WOULD BE A +RELIEF+ TO ALL SECTIONS.

THE FACT THAT CUEPACS WAS PREPARED TO CANCEL THE PICKET IF THE DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD SHOWED THAT IT HAD CHANGED ITS STANCE AND WAS CONSIDERING THE LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PICKET, HE ADDED.

DATUK AHMAD SAID THE CHANGE OF ATTITUDE, AND THE DISCUSSIONS IF HELD, WOULD SET THE PACE FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

THIS, HE SAID, WOULD BE A RELIEF TO SMALLHOLDERS WHO REGARDED THE PROBLEM AS A SERIOUS ONE.

THE UMNO YOUTH SAID IT ALSO WANTED ALL QUARTERS TO UNDERSTAND THE ADVERSE EFFECTS THE PICKET AND STRIKE ACTION WOULD HAVE IF CARRIED OUT BY CUEPACS. -- MORE

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ITS LABOUR BUREAU CHAIRMAN, HAJI MOHAMED PADIL HAJI HARUN, SAID THAT IF CUEPACS CARRIED OUT THE PICKET AND STRIKE ACTION, THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH WAS ALREADY BAD WOULD WORSEN AND DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE HAMPERED.

HE SAID THAT EVEN WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION, THE GOVERNMENT HAD INCREASED THE PAY OF CATEGORY C AND D CIVIL SERVANTS BY BETWEEN \$25 AND \$35.

+THE PRIME MINISTER HAD AGREED TO THE INCREASE BASED ON THE PREVAILING ECONOMIC SITUATION,+ HE ADDED.

ALL QUARTERS, HE SAID, SHOULD REALISE THAT TRADE UNIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES ALSO SOUGHT HIGHER WAGES BUT NOT AT A TIME WHEN THEIR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY WAS REELING UNDER THE EFFECTS OF THE RECESSION.

THE 1986 BUDGET TO BE TABLED ON OCT 25 WOULD GIVE A CLEARER PICTURE OF THIS COUNTRY'S FINANCIAL SITUATION, HE SAID. -- BERNAMA 1726MST 17 10 85