

No date yet for Cuepacs-PM talks

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Prime Minister said yesterday he would probably have a preliminary meeting with Cuepacs president Ahmad Nor and its secretary-general Haji Jamaluddin Mohamed Isa over the civil servants' wage claims dispute next week.

However, he did not specify a date.

"My officials will inform Cuepacs when I have decided on the date," he told newsmen at Parliament House.

A source said Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin had proposed a date for the preliminary meeting but it had to be confirmed by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Encik Daim has been busy with the Budget preparations. However, he is expected to seek confirmation from the Prime Minister probably today (yesterday)," he said.

Cuepacs is likely to be informed of the date today.

"In the meantime, Cue-

pacs and the five NJCs (Staff Side) have been told to stand by," said another source.

The preliminary meeting will enable both parties to agree on common areas of discussion in relation to the wage claims.

Once such an accord is reached, it will be brought up at a full-scale meeting between the Prime Minister and his officials and representatives of Cuepacs and the five NJCs (Staff Side).

It is understood that the date for this full-scale meeting will be decided at the preliminary discussions.

Encik Ahmad is understood to have prepared at least four proposals for the preliminary talks.

These include official acceptance by the Government of the June 12 pay offer to civil servants in Groups C and D and the lower grades in the armed forces and the police as an interim general salary revision, reviewing the service allowance and a further increase of

\$20 or five per cent in the basic salary of the civil servants.

Encik Ahmad, when contacted today, said he was awaiting the confirmation of the date for the preliminary meeting from Encik Daim or the Prime Minister himself.

He had been trying to contact Encik Daim for the last two days but was informed that the Minister was busy with the Budget preparations.

"We will be patient but we hope to hear of the preliminary meeting as soon as possible."

On Tuesday, Encik Ahmad received a letter from the Prime Minister confirming that he was ready to meet Cuepacs and the five NJCs (Staff Side) over the wage claims.

Consequently, as a gesture of goodwill, Encik Ahmad directed the cancellation of the proposed nation-wide picket scheduled for Wednesday by unions affiliated to Cuepacs and the five NJCs (Staff Side).

By SABRY SHARIF