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MAHATHIR-CUEPACS

86 (Y)
KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 18 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY SAID THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL BY CUEPACS THAT IT +SIGN FIRST AND PAY LATER+ AS A STEP TOWARDS SETTLEMENT OF THE 19-MONTH-OLD WAGE CLAIMS DISPUTE OF THE CIVIL SERVANTS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AT THE ROYAL MALAYSIAN AIR FORCE BASE HERE ON HIS RETURN FROM LABUAN, HE SAID: +WE CANNOT DO THAT BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BE.+

HE WAS COMMENTING ON THE REPORTED PROPOSAL BY CUEPACS SECRETARY-GENERAL HAJI JAMALUDDIN ISA THAT CUEPACS WOULD NOT +FIGHT+ THE GOVERNMENT IF, AFTER CONCLUDING NEGOTIATIONS ON THE WAGE CLAIMS, IT WAS FOUND THERE WERE NO FUNDS TO PAY THE SALARY AND ALLOWANCE ADJUSTMENTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED THAT CUEPACS HAD PROPOSED THIS SOLUTION MANY TIMES BUT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT DO IT.

+THERE IS NOTHING NEW ABOUT THAT (THE PROPOSAL), AS THEY HAVE TOLD US (ABOUT IT) A LONG TIME AGO.+ -- MORE
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ACCORDING TO THE PROPOSAL, THE AGREEMENT WAS TO BE ENFORCED UNTIL SUCH TIME BOTH SIDES AGREED THE GOVERNMENT HAS THE MONEY TO PAY PART OR ALL OF THE AGREED NEW SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIONS WERE TO JOINTLY MONITOR THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE COUNTRY EVERY FOUR MONTHS TO DECIDE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO PAY THE NEW SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES. --
BERNAMA

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