

PM says no again to 'sign first' Cuepacs proposal

By VONG NYAM MING

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday again dismissed Cuepacs' sign first, pay later proposals.

"How can we accept this? We can't predict the future. It's not possible for us to accept the proposals," he said on his arrival at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Sungei Besi base.

The sign first, pay later offer to the government was repeated yesterday by Cuepacs general-secretary, Haji Jamaluddin Mohamed Isa, to defuse the 19-month-old wage claims of civil servants.

The proposals mean that the government will have to be able to predict its future financial capacity to pay for the agreed new salaries and allowances, Dr Mahathir said.

No government can predict accurately how its future financial capability will be, he added.

Dr Mahathir returned to Kuala Lumpur yesterday from a two-day visit to the Federal Territory of Labuan as part of his state by state tour to gauge support for the Barisan Nasional.

Cuepacs' sign first, pay later formula allows the government to defer new wage scales if both sides agree that the government is not capable of implementing a new wage scale.

If both parties agree after the agreement is concluded that the government is not capable of implementing the new salaries and allowances, then Cuepacs is willing to sign another agreement to defer the pay revision, Encik Jamaluddin said.

The government has agreed to meet Cuepacs next month.