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PSD studying Cuepacs' request: PM

THE Public Services Department (PSD) is looking into a request by the Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs) for an increase in permanent housing allowance.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government's decision will depend on PSD's report and on whether the Government can to meet the request.

Dr Mahathir commented on the issue at the MCA Chinese New Year open house in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. He was asked if the Government had made a decision on the matter.

The Prime Minister said the Government will have to study its financial position before making any decision.

Cuepacs submitted the memorandum to PSD last month seeking an increase in permanent housing allowance to RM230 a month.

The housing allowance for those in the professional and management group is RM110 a month while staff in the support group receive RM90.

Besides the housing allowance, Cuepacs' other requests were related to pension payment and the matrix system under the New Remuneration Scheme.

Asked whether he felt the requests were reasonable, Dr Mahathir said, "I can't say ... I have to wait for PSD to give its views."

On whether it was true that the Government had agreed to increase the housing allowance for those based in urban areas, he said: "No decision has been made yet. We have only studied the requests."

Meanwhile, Bernama reported that Cuepacs president Mohamad Mat Jid, in welcoming Dr Mahathir's statement, expressed hopes that the PSD would expedite its study of the memorandum.

"We are only asking for fair consideration from the Government," he said when contacted.

Based on the country's current economy and financial situation of the Government, Cuepacs' claim was reasonable and should be accepted by the Government, he added.

Mohamad expressed Cuepacs' full confidence in Dr Mahathir in resolving the matter "because we know that Dr Mahathir is a fair man."

The last time he met Dr Mahathir to discuss the Cuepacs claim was at the Prime Minister's Department on October 29. At that meeting, also attended by Cuepacs secretary-general S.Siva Subramaniam, Dr Mahathir was reported to have asked Cuepacs to submit its claims and proposals to the PSD.

Mohamad said Cuepacs has not received any feedback from the PSD.

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