

03 NOV 1998

Halim-Holiday

NO PLAN FOR FIVE-DAY WEEK IN PUBLIC SECTOR

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- The government has no plan to introduce a five-day working week for civil servants, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali said today.

He said it was enough to give civil servants one Saturday off every month as announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when he tabled the 1999 Budget last month.

"Giving one (Saturday) day off is already a big progress. We will have to see what the situation is like," he said when commenting on Cuepacs' call for the government to introduce a five-day week and to give incentives to civil servants in place of bonus for 1998.

Cuepacs could appeal but the government had announced its decision in the budget proposals, he told reporters after opening the Commonwealth Top Management Programme here.

"I have not received the appeal officially. For the moment, the decision is as announced in the budget and there has been no change," he said.

Halim said the proposal to declare one Saturday a holiday every month would be implemented in January and the government would announce the designated Saturday soon.

The government would consider the views of all parties, including that of Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Sabbaruddin Chik, before deciding, he said.

Sabbaruddin has suggested that the first Saturday of the month be declared a holiday to help boost domestic tourism as civil servants received their salary at the end of every month.

"We are still studying whether it should be the first or last Saturday," Halim said.

Halim also said about 70 government employees had been identified to be involved in illegal assemblies and action would be taken against them according to existing regulations.

Halim was reported to have said in Melaka last week that disciplinary action against civil servants involved in anti-government demonstrations could only be taken after the court had decided on their cases.

-- BERNAMA

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