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Lim-Unions

UNIONS OF FIVE AGENCIES URGED NOT TO PROCEED WITH PICKETTING

SEREMBAN, June 25 (Bernama) -- Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek said he would investigate the reasons for the delay in implementing the salary adjustment for staff of five government agencies announced on June 4.

"The delay should not have occurred as the adjustment does not involve government funds but financed by the five government agencies involved," he told reporters after presenting scholarships to 198 students of INTI College at Bandar Baru Nilai, near here today.

He was commenting on claims by staff of the five agencies concerned who would pickett if the salary adjustment was not speeded up.

On June 4, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced a pay rise of between RM150 and RM200 for 10,892 staff of five statutory bodies who were separated from the New Remuneration System (SSB) effective Jan 1 1995.

Dr Mahathir said following the adjustment, those in the executive group would receive an increase of RM200 a month while non-executives would receive an increase of RM150 a month. The adjustment involved a financial implication of RM92.4 million.

The staff unions of the Social Security Organisation (Perkeso), Employees Provident Fund (KWSP), Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN), Lembaga Tabung Haji (Tabung Haji) and the Armed Forces Fund Board (LTAT) had submitted pay claims in 1996 following approval of the salary adjustment for staff under the SSB in April 1996. The adjustment was also effective from Jan 1 1995.

Early last month, the staff unions of the five agencies concerned had approved a resolution to hold peaceful picketting if their claims were not settled by the government before June 7.

Lim urged union representatives of the five government agencies to meet with him and reminded them that what was important was that the government had made a decision to approve the salary adjustment and they should be thankful to the government.

He said there might be certain reasons for the delay and it was not deliberate.

"Thus, picketting is not the solution because they can come and see me to overcome whatever problems there may be," he said.

Meanwhile, speaking at the ceremony, Lim said the government had set up the Industrial Training Loan Fund with an initial fund of RM500 million which would be managed by a corporation under his ministry.

Initially, only trainees at public skill training institutions would receive benefits from the fund while it was proposed that trainees at the state skill development centres (SSDC) and private training institutions would receive such benefits from January 2001.

Those eligible would be given loans to meet the cost of education fees subject to a maximum of RM3,000 a year for trainees in public institutions and RM7,000 a year for trainees in private skill training institutions and SSDC.

"Trainees would also be given loans to cater for the cost of living allowance of RM4,800 a year and cost of books amounting to RM500 a year," said Lim.

The Human Resources Ministry projected about 132,000 youths would benefit from the fund by the year 2005.

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