

# PM willing to meet Cuepac's on retirement age

'But Cabinet not bound to act on views'

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PUTRAJAYA, Tues: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is willing to meet Cuepac's on its proposal to extend the mandatory retirement age for civil servants from 55 to 58.

The Prime Minister said the Cabinet had fixed 55 as the retirement age for government employees based on specific reasons.

"But if people can give other reasons which the Cabinet did not consider, we are prepared to listen.

"Whether or not we will be influenced by these other views is another matter," he said after a leadership session with Umno leaders here.

Cuepac's said yesterday that it hopes to meet Maha-

thir to present him with additional points to consider.

President N. Siva Subramaniam said more than 12,000 government employees go on mandatory retirement every year, requiring the government to make big allocations for gratuity and pension payments.

MTUC president Senator Zainal Rampak urged the government to take several matters into consideration:

- > extended life expectancy;
- > late entry into the job market because of a higher level of education
- > neighbouring countries having raised the retirement age;
- > many healthy, skilled and experienced workers capable

of productive work for many more years being forced out of the job market; and

> unlike retirees in the developed countries who can sit back and relax or take up new hobbies, those in Malaysia become vulnerable and depressed due to financial uncertainty.

"We are surprised Malaysia has yet to come to terms with the changed needs of workers in such a dynamic and progressive socio-economic scenario," Zainal said in a statement today.

DAP chairman Lim Kit Siang said that if judges are only retired at 65, "there is no reason why civil servants cannot function effectively up to the age of 60".