

18/06/2000

Cuepacs wants to meet over Socso

Azran Aziz

KUANTAN, Sat. - Cuepacs is seeking a meeting with the Public Service Department and the Human Resources Minister to further convince them why Socso coverage should be extended to the civil service.

Cuepacs president S. Siva Subramaniam said today from what he had gathered, the Cabinet had rejected the proposal submitted by the PSD.

"We will have a dialogue with both parties to forward our suggestions for the Cabinet to reconsider. We are confident of getting a positive response."

He was speaking to reporters after attending the opening of the National Union of Teaching Profession's Pahang office by Deputy Menteri Besar Datuk Tan Mohd Aminuddin Ishak.

Socso benefits are available to non-pensionable staff in statutory bodies and private sector employees.

In 1995, the Government came up with a compensation payment scheme or ex-gratia payment scheme for civil servants similar to Socso's packages.

However, the scheme was only temporary and Siva Subramaniam said it was not as comprehensive as Socso's.

Siva Subramaniam said Cuepacs would push for a permanent scheme.

"The Government has plans to extend Socso coverage to foreign workers. So it is not proper to leave out civil servants," he said, adding that 600,000 civil servants would enjoy Socso benefits if the coverage were to be extended to those in the public sector.

He said Cuepacs understood the constraints of the Government which had to set aside quite a large sum of money for contribution to Socso.

"But we want something positive and permanent so that civil servants will get the protection they deserve. The compensation payment scheme is temporary and can be withdrawn any time," he said.

Siva Subramaniam said Cuepacs would continue with the consultative approach in dealing with the issue.

He said Socso was also providing scholarships to children of contributors but sadly, children of civil servants were not eligible for that.

On its request to the Government to raise the retirement age of civil servants, Siva Subramaniam said Cuepacs was leaving it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We have submitted our memorandum to him. Just wait for the announcement and Cuepacs will abide by the decision," he said.

(END)