

Cuepacs: Not the right time to picket

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KUALA LUMPUR: Cuepacs regards teamwork and unity in government, trade unions and workers' organisations as crucial during troubled times.

Cuepacs president N. Siva Subramaniam said this was why the congress of public service unions did not condone pickets and demonstrations when the country was going through a problematic phase.

"That does not mean that Cuepacs is denying the country's workforce its rights. But under current circumstances it is important for everyone to act responsibly," he said at a press conference to announce the organisation's first joint Workers' Day celebrations with the Public Services Department (PSD).

He said Cuepacs has held discussions with the Malaysian Trades Unions Congress (MTUC) to call off its proposed nationwide picket on May 12 in protest over the Government's announcement on a reduction in EPF contribution by employees.

"Cuepacs respects MTUC's rights to picket, but we have spoken to them about working as a team with the Government and solving whatever differences via negotiations," said Siva Subramaniam.

Cuepacs secretary-general Abd Rahman Manan said the congress would always protect the nation's interest and reputation so that foreign investors would continue investing.

Abd Rahman said the joint

celebrations between Cuepacs and the PSD was reflective of the camaraderie and goodwill between the two organisations.

He said it was a historical event as it was the first time ever that Cuepacs would hold an official celebration dedicated to the nation's civil servants.

"The event is also extra special as it would be attended by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Minister in the PM's department Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn."

"The highlight of the day would be the dialogue session between the Prime Minister and representatives from Cuepacs and its affiliates," he added.

The Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman, the director-general of the PSD and other top-ranking civil servants would also be present at the gathering.

"Previously only workers from the lower ranks participated in Workers Day activities but this time all civil servants regardless of their positions will congregate to celebrate the event," said Abd Rahman.

On another matter, Siva Subramaniam said Dr Mahathir's announcement that workers would be allowed to decide on the amount of their monthly EPF contributions was reflective of the Government's sensitivity towards the needs of the nation's workforce.