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Happy days ahead for 950,000 workers

THE 950,000 civil servants in the country have every reason to smile with Budget 2002 as they stand to benefit in terms of salary increases, bonus and other perks which come either directly or indirectly.

There is also good news for widows who re-marry - they will continue to enjoy their late husbands' pension.

However, it is hoped that there will not be many who will marry a second wife and leave their first wife because of this provision, quipped Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when tabling the Budget under his capacity as the Finance Minister.

Civil servants are given many a benefit under the Budget 2002 as a record of appreciation for their commitment and dedication.

The Government will award a bonus of half-month salary or at least RM1,000 for 2001. Half of the bonus will be paid this month and the rest, next month.

The bonus is being offered with the hope that it will help civil servants meet expenses for the coming festivals as well to assist those with schoolgoing children once school reopens.

Cuepacs president Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam said civil servants had every reason to rejoice because besides having had a 10 per cent basic salary increase last year, they were getting another 10 per cent increase in salary next year.

This increase is possible given the higher Government revenue as a result of economic growth and the Government's prudent financial management.

Siva hoped civil servants would appreciate the bonus payment and the salary increase. Together with the abolition on the limit of bonus payment by the private sector, the measures would contribute to increased purchasing power of the majority of the rakyat.

"I must say that this Budget will benefit those in the lower income bracket," he said, adding that this Budget should motivate all civil servants to work even harder to help the Government successfully implement all its programmes for the benefit of the rakyat.

The Prime Minister had also expressed his belief that the excellence and professionalism of the civil service would continue to be enhanced, particularly in the light of greater difficulties in both external and internal environment.

Under the Budget, medical officers in the public sector will see the overtime allowance increased by between 25 and 50 per cent effective from Oct 1.

In appreciation of the contribution by volunteers in the security forces, particularly the armed forces, police and civil defence, the annual gratuity rate for officers and personnel will be increased from RM400 to RM520 from Oct 1.

For volunteers in the Malaysian armed forces, the specialist grant for officers, which has not been revised since 1958, will be increased by 100 per cent from RM150 to RM300 annually.

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