

BETTER

STAR 30 JUL 2002

WAGES

New deal for govt workers under MRS

By NICK LEONG

PUTRAJAYA: Higher salaries, a one-off payment upon conversion and more promotional posts are among several new perks for civil servants in the Malaysian Remuneration System (MRS), which replaces the New Remuneration System (NRS) from Nov 1.

The controversial appraisal method under the NRS where heads of department have the sole discretion to recommend employees for merit increments or promotions has been scrapped. Competency tests or courses will be the criteria used for this purpose.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who announced this yesterday, said the 950,000 civil servants and police and armed forces personnel would have their basic salaries increased according to their categories - RM15 (Support Group), RM65 (Managerial and Professional Group) and RM110 (Higher Managerial Group).

"The basis (for promotion) will be on the competency of the workers and their professional development.

"Cuepacs has assured that this will lead to higher productivity. If they (the workers) don't (improve themselves), they will lose out," he said after chairing a meeting with Cuepacs leaders at his office.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman and Cuepacs president Datuk N. Siva Subranniam were among those present.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, said the MRS would cost the Government RM302.54mil during its first year of implementation, adding that the figure would eventually grow to RM976.86mil in 2006.

"It is quite a heavy burden but it is affordable," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the pay increase under the MRS means that civil servants would enjoy a total salary increase of about 21% over the past two years.

However, he maintained that the higher salaries under the MRS were not a pay rise.

"The increase is necessary for streamlining purposes. It is incidental and not our purpose or intention to give anybody a pay rise," he said.

On the assessment system under the NRS, Dr Mahathir said there had been a lot of dissatisfaction among civil servants because it exposed them to the whims and fancies of the heads of department.

"We have eliminated this (under the MRS). We will not depend solely on that (assessment of department heads)," he said.

With the MRS, he said promo-

● TURN TO PAGE TWO

AT A GLANCE

1. Basic salaries increased by RM15 (Support Group), RM65 (Managerial and Professional Group) and RM110 (Higher Managerial Group) from Nov 1
2. One-off payment of RM220 (Support Group), RM350 (Managerial and Professional Group) and RM650 (Higher Managerial Group) upon opting to MRS
3. Additional maximum basic salary for all categories
4. Examinations and courses to test competency before promotions and upgrading. Heads of departments no longer have sole discretion
5. Three-tiered Matrix Salary Scale reduced to two. Staff get either one annual increment or merit jump.
6. Human Resource Development Panel in all departments to monitor annual appraisal of employees
7. Additional promotional posts in all categories
8. Probation period now between one and three years (previously three years)
9. Those on full-pay study leave now eligible for annual increment. Those on half or no-pay will get notional increments
10. Four additional services placed under critical services

STAR 30 JUL 2002

Five extra grades

● FROM PAGE ONE

tions would be decided through a series of examinations and courses.

"It is up to members of the public service to determine their pay rise and progress of their career. The department heads will not have absolute control (on promotion of subordinates)," he said.

Dr Mahathir said salary movements would either be normal increases or incremental credits (merit jumps).

He said the Government also agreed to modify the Performance Evaluation System.

"For the purpose of monitoring this system, a Human Resources Development Panel will be set up in every depart-

ment," he said.

To improve career development, he said five additional promotion grades would be created in the MRS.

He said that under the excellent service award scheme, 72,000 civil servants would be given RM1,000 each besides commendations.

Dr Mahathir said there would be no compulsion for civil servants to opt for the MRS.

Siva Subramaniam said the MRS marked a new era for the civil service because salaries would be based on individual potential and ability.

He said a civil servant would have no one to blame but himself if he failed to get promoted under the MRS.