

20 SEP 2002

Budget-Reaction (Cuepacs)

CUEPACS LAUDS HIGHEST BONUS PAYMENT FOR CIVIL SERVANTS IN SIX YEARS

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- Cuepacs, the public sector umbrella union, today lauded the government's move to hand civil servants a month's bonus, the highest paid to the civil service in the last six years.

Cuepacs president Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam, on behalf of the umbrella union which represents close to one million civil servants in the country, thanked the Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for dishing out the long awaited goodie.

"We welcome the bonus payout, which is the highest in the last six years. This shows the government's commitment to the civil service. It also shows that the government is considerate of the plight of the civil servants in the country," he said in a telephone interview.

Dr Mahathir, in his Budget speech at Parliament today, announced that civil servants would be paid one month bonus or a minimum of RM1,200.

Siva said civil servants in the lower income bracket would stand to get a "two months" bonus since their pay barely touched RM1,200.

"There are about 500,000 civil servants in this category and for them it would be two months bonus as their salary hovered around RM700...this is good, the government is sensitive to the plight of the lower income group," he added.

He hoped that these half-a-million civil servants, who form the core group of the civil service, would work hard and pay the government back by improving productivity.

Siva also expressed relief that the Budget did not impose any new taxes nor were there any rise in existing taxes involving the people.

"We should appreciate this...no new taxes and no rise in any of the present taxes so it's not a burden for the people," he added.

Overall, he said the Budget was an economic booster in the effort to make Malaysia the centre of growth in the region.

"It's a concrete budget to boost the economy to reach new frontiers, the budget prepares our economy to face future challenges in an effort to make Malaysia a centre of growth in the region," he said.

-- BERNAMA

SR AHH AO