

Ray of hope for civil servants

PUTRAJAYA: There is a ray of hope of a salary revision for the 1.1 million civil servants, who last had one 14 years ago.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Government was open to such a proposal but reminded them it would depend on its financial position.

"Cuepacs has been asking for a salary revision. The Government is open in this matter and we will study the proposal," he said in his annual meeting and dialogue with senior government officers at the Putrajaya Convention Centre here yesterday.

"However, we need to take into account our financial situation. With Cuepacs' give and take attitude, the Government hopes we will come to a decision to ease their burden."

Also present were Cabinet Ministers, including Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and

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Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Sidek Hassan.

Cuepacs, in an immediate response, submitted a draft memorandum to Abdullah during the dialogue, and its president Omar Osman is confident a salary revision would be approved this year.

To the applause of some 3,000 civil servants, Omar said with the 50-year celebration of independence this year, Cuepacs hoped the Prime Minister would make an announcement on May 1 to coincide with Labour Day.

Last September, Abdullah had said the Government was not prepared to consider a salary revision for civil servants, as it would involve an additional RM6bil.

He said the Government would need money for development.

Cuepacs had asked for a salary revision of between 10% and 40% for supporting staff right up to senior government officers.