

Now 200,000 civil servants want more pay

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PETRAJAYA: First the police. Now, about 200,000 civil servants from the support category with a basic pay of RM480 are asking for a salary hike.

Cuepacs salary revision chairman Omar Osman said a memorandum would be submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi next month.

Abdullah is also chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Public Service Management and Salary.

Omar, who is also Cuepacs deputy president, said the salaries of these lowest paid group of civil servants had not been reviewed for 16 years.

"These workers, who are hospital attendants, drivers,

gardeners and general workers, are getting a basic pay of less than RM500 a month although the cost of living in cities like Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya is getting higher and higher.

"Cuepacs hopes the government will consider this request," he said.

"We are proposing an increase of between 10 and 40 per cent for this group."

These workers joined the service with Standard Six, Form Two or Lower Secondary Assessment qualifications.

Omar said that after serving the government for more than 20 years, their maximum salary, including allowances, came to less than RM1,000.

He said these workers, like

other civil servants, had to pass a competency test — the Penilaian Tahap Kecekapan — before they could hope for a promotion.

"With low education, how can they pass the test? This poses a problem. Most of them failed the test and as such, they did not get any promotion or salary rise."

Omar said some of these workers, especially those with school-going children, had to take on part-time jobs.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Musa Hassan recently said that his men's wages of RM650 put them among the country's hardcore poor.

Musa also said the police were in the midst of drafting a new salary scheme for its

members to be submitted to the Cabinet.

However, Public Service director-general Tan Sri Ismail Adam pointed out that the RM650 was the basic pay of low-ranking policemen, including constables, and that they enjoyed various allowances.