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Mohamed-RTM

RTM TO BUY 60 PER CENT OF ITS PROGRAMMES FROM BUMI PRODUCERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 11 (Bernama) -- The government TV station (RTM) will buy 60 per cent of its TV programmes from Bumiputera production companies registered with the Federal Treasury, Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said today.

He said the remaining 40 per cent would be obtained from non-Bumiputera companies which must also be registered with the Treasury.

"The new guideline will be applicable for all future purchase of TV programmes and I hope, there will be no longer talk of us neglecting Bumiputera companies," he told reporters after the ministry's weekly meeting at Angkasapuri, here.

With that, he hoped Bumiputera film and drama producers would ensure their production was of high quality.

"RTM must maintain its image as a government body and draw more viewers to the station. This can only be done if its programmes are of high quality," he said.

Mohamed said the decision which was made by the Treasury last month was to enable Bumiputera companies to remain viable following claims that RTM had neglected their interest and that it had become a "dumping ground" by others.

He hoped that private TV stations would also follow the guideline.

"So far, we do not make it as a condition in their licence but we will do it if stations like TV3, Metrovision and Measat refuse to give cooperation," he said.

He said it was the only way to develop local film and drama industry.

On the pinching of RTM staff by the private sector, Mohamed said more would leave if the situation was not under control.

So far, 400 staff had left because they received better offer elsewhere, some three times more what they were getting with RTM, he said.

"Recently we tried to fill important posts in the technical department. For the 180 vacancies, only 38 people applied," he said.

He said that out of four who reported for duty only one still remained with RTM.

Mohamed said the situation was due to RTM's salary structure which was not attractive to potential workers.

He said he would brief Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir soon on the "critical situation" facing RTM.

"No one will be interested in working with RTM because of low pay," said Mohamed who had before this suggested of an immediate corporatisation as one way of resolving the problem. -- BERNAMA

ZAB ABG