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Law-Russian

MALAYSIA TO USE RUSSIAN "ARTIFICIAL CYCLONES" TO CLEAR HAZE

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 12 (Bernama) -- The Ministry of Science, Technology and Science will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Russian-owned government company for the use of artificial cyclones in the cloud seeding operation to induce rain.

Its minister, Datuk Law Hieng Ding said the technology using ground and orbital satellite could create artificial cyclones in atmospheric level which in turn will induce rain.

"The technology is harmless as no chemicals are use and the artificial cyclones will only occur in the atmosphere," he told reporters here, today.

He said the technology could also be used in the Asean region and President Suharto had expressed interest in it when the Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim met him recently.

"President Suharto expressed interest in this technology and will consider allowing it to be used in Indonesia," he said.

He said the signing of the MoU had already obtained the approval of the cabinet while the Finance Ministry had approved financing to acquire the technology.

According to Law, the ministry would not be paying a single sen until it is satisfied that the technology works.

But the cloud-seeding operation using this technology would be cheaper and cover a wider area like the whole of Peninsula and Sabah/Sarawak, he said, adding that it is a proven-technology as claimed by its manufacturer.

On the cost, Law said the technology worth millions but declined to elaborate.

Meanwhile, the ministry would continued its cloud-seeding operations using eight RMAF (Royal Malaysian Air Force) C-130 and Skyvan but only at selected time as the nation has a lot of rain now.

Law also said the ministry had held discussions with Malaysia Electric Company (MEC) to manufacture air purifier which can clean outdoor air and filter major pollutants.

The government wants MEC to produce the table-top and water-flow air-purifier locally as they are cheaper, compared with the foreign made ones, and produced comparable results.

The idea was mooted by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he said.

He said it would be given serious consideration by the Department of Environment (DOE), SIRIM Berhad and Chemistry Department in determining the viability and finding the right technologies before it could be implemented. --BERNAMA

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