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Mohamed-Anwar

MINISTRY TO CLEAR POLITICAL CONFUSION, SAYS MOHAMED

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- The Information Ministry will embark on a large-scale public awareness drive to clear the air over the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the government and Umno, an issue which the minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said has created "political confusion" among Malaysians.

Mohamed told reporters here today the ministry was duty-bound to clear the air over the issue so that the masses could appreciate the reasons for Anwar's expulsion.

"Anwar's dismissal from the government and party warrants explanation as certain quarters had capitalised on the issue to create a political confusion," he said after presenting the ministry's Quality Day awards.

He said: "Obviously Datuk Seri Anwar is angry that he was sacked and he asked others to vent their anger too ... whereas it is the party's right to expel a member and also the right of the prime minister to dismiss a minister he deems unfit," Mohamed said.

He said the arising confusion had given rise to saboteurs out to undermine the country's stability and security.

"We must stop these destructive elements from running wild defying the laws of the land. But I don't think the people at large support what they do especially citizens who put national security and stability first," he said.

He said the ministry had initiated a similar awareness campaign nation-wide over radio television last month to enlighten the people on the current economic problems.

Mohamed also said his ministry's licensing and advertising departments would be transferred to the Energy, Telecommunications and Multimedia Ministry whose formation was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday.

From now on approval for applications for licences and radio and television advertisements would be handled by the independent commission established under the Multimedia Act which would also oversee all private television and radio stations.

Mohamed said Radio and Television Malaysia's (RTM) would now confine itself to only running matters relating to government information which would remain under the purview of his ministry.

"The commission will also deal with the news content of the private radio and television stations. RTM will only handle programmes for the government," he said.

The government had also decided to restructure RTM into a corporation to enable it to compete with the other private broadcasting agencies, he said.

"The RTM structure needs changing. It can't remain as a government department because there will emerge too many restrictions which will only make things difficult for us," he said.

"If RTM is turned into a corporation or government company, there may be some flexibility with regard to appointments and dismissals and financial procedures which will somewhat ease our tasks and responsibilities," he said.

Mohamed expressed hope a study of RTM's restructuring could be expedited so that the exercise could be carried out next year at the earliest.

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