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`Multimedia commission will be independent'

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The proposed Communications and Multimedia Commission will be an independent regulatory agency similar to the Securities Commission.

Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Leo Moggie said today this was in line with the Government's move to promote more independent regulatory agencies within the various industries.

He said the commission, which will supervise competition and encourage growth in the communications and multimedia industry, would also draw up its own rules and staffing structure.

Moggie was speaking to reporters after the opening of the four-day Asean Telecom '98 conference and exhibition by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The commission will be independent ... will not function as a government department. It will be a separate entity.

"We think this will provide the commission greater flexibility," he said, adding that the ministry hoped members of the commission would be appointed as soon possible.

The Prime Minister had announced the setting up of the commission on Friday.

The commission was proposed following the renaming of the Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Ministry to Energy, Communications and Multimedia Ministry.

The Commission for Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 provides for a single and independent regulatory body to ensure healthy and competitive operations within this industry.

Moggie also said the setting up of the commission, which will take over the powers of certain departments such as the Department of Telecommunications and Department of Broadcasting, would involve some staff restructuring.

"The Public Service Department will make recommendations on staff restructuring."

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