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TABUNG HAJI-MAS

TABUNG HAJI WILLING TO CONSIDER TAKING A STAKE IN MAS

IPOH, Nov 13 (Bernama) -- Tabung Haji is willing to consider taking a stake in Malaysia Airlines (MAS) if the government made an offer, in line with its plan to own a plane for its haj service.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Datuk Seri Dr Abdul Hamid Othman said holding a stake in MAS would be in line with Tabung Haji's intention to own or hire a plane to facilitate its yearly haj service.

"However, this will all depend on the government, whether or not it wants Tabung Haji to own the shares in MAS, which will be decided by the Finance Ministry," he told reporters after the opening ceremony of Tabung Haji's RM21.1 million building, here today.

The building which was completed last year was occupied beginning June this year. It places Tabung Haji's office and also the Syariah Court.

The Sultan of Perak, Sultan Azlan Shah officiated the ceremony.

Abdul Hamid said that the Finance Ministry would determine which company could hold shares in MAS, and normally the government would choose a company which has expertise and experience in such a field.

He also said that if there was a request for Tabung Haji to buy the shares in MAS, it would first ensure that the investment would not create a controversy like what had happened previously.

He said that Tabung Haji had previously held shares in MAS, but it had to relinquish the shares in 1989 in stages when a controversy arose where its contributors brought up issues about MAS serving liquor on its flights.

Currently, MAS is helmed by its chairman, Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli who holds a 29.09 percent equity via Naluri Bhd.

Recently, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that the government would relinquish its golden share in MAS if it posed to be an obstacle to foreign investors keen on taking up a stake in the national carrier.

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