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Abdullah-MAS

GOVT WILL GIVE ATTENTION TO MASEU'S VIEWS- ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the government will give attention to the views expressed by the Malaysian Airline System Employees Union (Maseu).

The union had expressed the hope that the government would not sell MAS shares to any individual or any foreign company.

"We will give attention to the views expressed by Maseu," the Deputy Prime Minister told reporters at the Subang Royal Malaysian Air Force Base near here after seeing off Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who left for Myanmar for a two-day working visit.

Abdullah was asked to comment on the statement by Maseu President Alias Aziz yesterday that MAS staff "would be more comfortable" if the government retained control of MAS.

Alias said the government's purchase of the 29.09 per cent MAS share which Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli (Executive Chairman) held via Naluri Berhad (Naluri) on Dec 20 had saved the airline from falling into foreign control.

Naluri announced that the government had purchased the shares for RM1.792 billion at RM8 per share.

Abdullah said the government appreciated the Maseu's pledge to work towards further improving the quality of MAS service.

With such service, more passengers and tourists would fly MAS, he added.

"I am sure the pledge will be welcomed by the people and MAS customers," Abdullah said.

Alias had said, "There was no choice left but for the Government to save MAS in the interest of the country, as we do not want to come to a situation where MAS is controlled by foreigners or faces closure."

Talk that MAS shares would be purchased by a foreign airline had caused fear among MAS staff that their services would be terminated, he said.

The 8,500-strong Maseu expressed its sincere thanks to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his assurance that the welfare of MAS staff was guaranteed and that there would be no retrenchment.

-- BERNAMA

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