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MAS-Union

MASEU WANTS GOVT TO RETAIN CONTROL OF MALAYSIA AIRLINES

PETALING JAYA, Jan 2 (Bernama) -- The Malaysia Airline System Employee's Union has expressed the hope that the government will never again sell MAS shares to any individual or foreign company.

Maseu President Alias Aziz said union members "would be very comfortable" if the government controlled MAS interests.

"Any decision made by the government should take into account the overall interests and not the interest of any individual," he told Bernama here.

He 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.

"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," he said.

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.

Alias said this assurance was a New Year gift to MAS staff from the Prime Minister and the Government.

MAS staff should reciprocate by improving the quality of service and retoring MAS' image, Alias said.

On a successor to Tajudin as MAS Executive Chairman, he said the union preferred someone from within MAS to be appointed to head the airline.

"It will be appropriate from someone within MAS as there are people within the airline with wide experience in running the company and knew how to restore MAS image," he said.

Meanwhile President of the MAS Managers Association Shul Hameed Marican said the repurchase of MAS shares and the Prime Minister's assurance that staff would not be retrenched was a great relief to all MAS staff.

"It creates a nice feeling among staff and they should be grateful to the government and strive to improve their service," he said.

He also proposed that the government do away with the post of Executive Chairman and instead create two posts -- Chairman and Managing Director -- to be held by two different persons.

-- BERNAMA

RZS AHH AAM