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Top management changes may kickstart MRCB revamp (HL)

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TOP management changes at Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd (MRCB) are expected to kickstart a restructuring process for the debt-laden diversified group.

It is understood that MRCB will appoint Abdul Rahman Ahmad, 31, as chief executive and Shahril Ridza Ridzuan, 30, as executive director. They were both formerly with Pengurusan Danaharta Nasional Bhd and may join MRCB's board as early as this week.

"There is some minor reshuffle. (MRCB president) Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Maidin will be chairman but a few people will come in to do the day-to-day running," said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He was speaking to reporters after holding a closed-door meeting with Umno leaders in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Abdul Rahman Ahmad was with Danaharta Managers Sdn Bhd, a loan management unit of Danaharta, and Shahril with the national asset management company's legal division.

They left in 1999 to set up their own consulting firm that specialises in turning companies around. They are expected to deal with MRCB's RM1.8 billion debt and also help stem its associated companies' losses.

Abdul Rahman Ahmad declined comment when contacted by Business Times yesterday. Both Cambridge graduates, he and Shahril were also senior managers at oil and gas company Trenergy (Malaysia) Bhd before joining Danaharta.

MRCB has a 44 per cent interest in The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Bhd (NSTP) that publishes five daily newspapers, including Business Times.

NSTP posted losses of RM86.22 million for the nine months to May 31 2001 and has borrowings totalling RM1.4 billion, 86 per cent of which is short-term.

Another company in the MRCB stable, Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Bhd or TV3, yesterday announced that its executive vice chairman Datuk Mohd Ibrahim Mohd Nor has resigned from the board.

TV3 is in the midst of restructuring its debts under a proposed capital reduction scheme which would see Ibrahim emerging as the single largest shareholder with 25.9 per cent following an injection of RM172.5 million into the company.

MRCB is also involved in property development and power generation. It recently initiated some asset sales to reduce its debts.

Last month, the group agreed to sell its entire 22.7 per cent stake in financial services group Rashid Hussain Bhd to Utama Banking Group Bhd for RM399.5 million.

MRCB shares closed 6 sen higher at RM1.43 yesterday, while NSTP finished unchanged at RM4.00. TV3 rose 3 sen to 87 sen.

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