

## **Committee set up to study proposal for RTM-Bernamea merger**

**BERNAMA**

**28/06/2018**

PUTRAJAYA, June 28 (Bernama) -- The government is considering merging Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) and the Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama), said Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo.

He said a committee comprising people from various backgrounds will be formed this Wednesday to study the proposal.

"There are different views about the merger, so I have to study all aspects. There is a proposal for Bernama to be responsible for news and take over from RTM."

"This may reduce costs and the savings could be used to upgrade the programmes broadcast by RTM," he told reporters at his ministry's open house held in Dataran Gemilang here today.

Gobind is reported to have said in an interview with The Malaysian Reserve recently that the government was considering merging RTM and Bernama as a cost-saving measure.

Gobind also said RTM has been given six months to revamp its image and be more aggressive in drawing more viewers.

"However, any decision made has to be taken to the Cabinet to get the views and guidance of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad."

"This is because Bernama was set up under an Act of Parliament. So if there are any changes, the law must be amended and tabled in Parliament," he said.

On a separate development, Gobind said chairman of the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) Tan Sri Dr Halim Shafie and its chief operating officer Datuk Dr Mazlan Ismail as well as two other senior officials of the commission submitted their resignations on Monday.

He said their resignations would be effective from July 1.

"Several eligible candidates have been identified and their names will be announced soon. What is important is to look at the existing structure."

"There are suggestions that the post of chairman and chief executive officer be separated. All these have first to be studied and taken to the Cabinet," he said.

Gobind had earlier expressed his dissatisfaction of the way the MCMC handled various issues related to the data infringement and cyber attacks including the BOT (internet robot) attack on polling day (May 9).

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