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MAS acts on 'unfair' CA clauses

BY SA'ODAH ELIAS

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia Airlines (MAS) has agreed to revise its employment policy on stewardesses, especially clauses that could be termed as discriminatory.

The matter was agreed to in a meeting between the MAS management and various parties, including representatives from the Human Resources Ministry, Transport Ministry and the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry two months ago.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said MAS had agreed to review clauses that were considered unfair to women.

"All parties at the meeting were satisfied with the promise given by MAS," he told reporters after launching his ministry's Puspanita blood donation campaign yesterday.

MAS has been embroiled in a legal tussle with its former stewardess Beatrice Fernandez over her dismissal after she refused to resign when she became pregnant.

Fernandez, who had been a MAS employee for 11 years, lost a 14-year court battle against the airline; her claim was rejected by the Federal Court in March.

In its written statement made available on Friday, the Federal Court ruled that when Fernandez agreed to work with MAS, she had also consented to be bound by the terms of the company's collective agreement (CA).

Thus, it said, Fernandez could not complain that a provision requiring her to resign when she became pregnant was discriminatory.

To prevent a similar situation from occurring, Dr Fong said his ministry was willing to train union officials to study all angles when preparing the CA.

On the National Union of Bank Employees issue, Fong said about 23,000 of its members would be allowed to vote in its coming elections.

He said these were the registered members of the union before the 2001 crisis.

NUBE's branch election is scheduled for June 22 while the elections of its national office bearers will on Aug 7.

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