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DOSH, NIOSH to be separated

Their roles are similar now, says Kula

BANGI: The Human Resources Ministry is planning to separate the roles of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) through a proposed new Bill.

The move is needed because DOSH plays an important role in ensuring that employers comply with safety, health and welfare at workplaces, said minister M. Kulasegaran.

"Now, the roles played by NIOSH are similar to DOSH's. Since DOSH needs to be more active in enforcement, then perhaps the time has come for their (DOSH and NIOSH) roles to be separated.

"NIOSH plays a role in (skills) training under the ministry," he told reporters after a Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration at NIOSH headquarters in Bandar Baru Bangi yesterday.

Also present were NIOSH chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, deputy chairman Gunasegaran Kandaswamy and executive director Ayop Salleh.

Kulasegaran said the proposal to separate

the two entities had yet to receive the green light from the Cabinet.

"But we have analysed this proposal and think this is a good direction. Therefore the relevant papers are being drafted so it could get approval from the Cabinet soon," he said.

Kulasegaran said the proposal might be presented to the Cabinet in one or two months, adding that it would also be forwarded to the National Labour Advisory Council.

Earlier, in his speech, Kulasegaran said the ministry played an important role through NIOSH to ensure that the national workforce was able to obtain the necessary skills training.

At present, skilled workers only make up 28% of the workforce, he noted.

"The government is targeting at least 35% of the national workforce to be skilled by the end of next year.

"If workers are given the right training, just like what NIOSH is doing, then they should be getting high salaries, which will also assist the government in its efforts to increase national wages," he said.