

B E014 AAE
MAHATHIR-PHILIPPINES

KOTA KINABALU, JULY 8⁸⁶ (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT SAID TO HAVE A BEARING ON THAT COUNTRY'S CLAIM OVER SABAH.

HE TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF HIS TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT HERE THAT HE WOULD ONLY COMMENT ON THE MATTER AFTER STUDYING THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE AMENDMENT.

IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION HAD VOTED TO AMEND THE FIRST PROVISION IN THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION WHICH DEFINES THE COUNTRY'S TERRITORIAL RIGHTS.

THE REPORT SAID THE AMENDMENT WAS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH MALAYSIA WITHOUT HOWEVER FORFEITING THE CLAIM OVER SABAH.

THE RELEVANT PROVISION OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION WHICH PROVIDES FOR TERRITORIAL CLAIMS ON +HISTORICAL RIGHTS AND LEGAL TITLE+ WAS AMENDED TO READ +THE TERRITORIES OVER WHICH THE PHILIPPINES HAS SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION.+

IT IS SAID THIS CONFORMS WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ALSO ALLOWS FLEXIBILITY IN THE PURSUING OF THE SABAH CLAIM. -- BERNAMA
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