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Misuari-Model

MALAYSIA THE ROLE MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT IN MINDANAO

KUANTAN, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Mindanao will adopt Malaysia as its role model in development as it is very encouraged by the excellent performance of Malaysia in various fields, Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Governor Nur Misuari said today.

Malaysia had a very good record politically and in the economic field, he said at the end of a briefing on the development of Pahang by the State Economic Planning Unit director Datuk Baseri Lamsah at Wisma Seri Pahang here.

Misuari and his 20-member delegation were also shown video clips and multimedia slide presentation on Pahang's development at the three-hour briefing.

Earlier, they called on Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob. The visitors arrived here today from Kuala Lumpur as part of their week-long visit to the country beginning last Sunday to attract Malaysian investors to the southern Philippines.

Misuari said he was very grateful to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for their willingness to share Malaysia's experience to help in the development of Mindanao.

Misuari said he hoped to bring progress and development to Mindanao with the help of Muslim countries. The Muslim National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Philippine government had signed a peace treaty to end years of war and unrest in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, Khalil said Pahang would assist Mindanao in land development along the lines of Felde to eradicate poverty by giving technical assistance and know-how.

He said Pahang was also prepared to train the Mindanao people to become skilled workers in various fields.

"We are prepared to send our trainers or experts to train the Mindanao people in their own country as it will be less expensive than for the ARMM to send their people here," he said.

He suggested that ARMM implement a three-year or five-year development policy, and assess its implementation to ensure that the success of the programmes could be attained within a specific timeframe.

"ARMM have the advantage as they can learn from Malaysia's five-year development plan and improve on it...and hence making a short-cut to success," he said.

He said Pahang was once in a similar predicament to what Mindanao was facing now in terms of development, saying that not much attention was given to the East Coast states during the colonial days and most of the economic activities were focused in the West Coast states.

He said the state government hoped to turn Pahang into a developed and prosperous state by the year 2020.

Misuari later spent about 20 minutes visiting a photography exhibition on Umno's 50th anniversary at a shopping centre here.

He performed Friday prayers at the Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah mosque here.

He was scheduled to visit the Gebeng industrial site and a Felde scheme in Bukit Sagu, about 20km from here, later in the afternoon.

-- BERNAMA

AZ YBY