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Mahathir-Misuari

M'SIA PREPARED TO DEPORT MISUARI, REITERATES MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Umno supreme council will study the latest developments that can influence efforts to deport Philippine Muslim leader Nur Misuari.

The Umno president said he and his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahamd Badawi, had briefed the council members on the Misuari issue.

"Our stand is that Malaysia is prepared to deport Misuari," he said after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting at the party headquarters here.

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir was reported as saying that Misuari's flight to Malaysia could affect the country's relations with its neighbour.

He had said that Malaysia was prepared to deport Misuari but he must be accepted by the Philippine government.

Misuari, former governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, who is wanted by the Philippine government for allegedly instigating revolts in the southern Philippines, was arrested in Pulau Jampiras in Sabah waters last month.

Meanwhile, foreign news wire dpa reported Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as saying in Manila that government was already preparing for Misuari's deportation to that country.

Arroyo said that although she personally wanted Misuari to languish in a Malaysian jail, she stressed she would not impose her choice on Kuala Lumpur, especially if it would become a burden.

"If his (Misuari's) continued stay in Malaysia becomes a burden to their government, we are ready, we are already preparing to receive him and to put him in jail," she said at her weekly news conference.

Arroyo said Misuari's deportation would be based on a "mutually agreed upon period" between Manila and Kuala Lumpur, "which would not be very long from now".

She added that it was her understanding that Misuari was "being interrogated" by Malaysian authorities, who would later decide if they would file charges against him.

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