

19 JAN 2002

MAHATHIR ACTED IN GOOD FAITH IN SENDING BACK MISUARI, SAYS RESEARCHER

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad cannot be faulted for sending back Nur Misuari, the former governor of the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), to the Philippines to face charges of inciting rebellion.

Bangsamoro Research Centre Director Zakaria Abdullah said in a press statement here today that Dr Mahathir had acted in good faith in surrendering Misuari to Manila.

"As head of state, Dr Mahathir has to protect the national interest of Malaysia. And Misuari has also to answer various charges against him by the Philippine government as well as the Moro people that he served in the ARMM," he said.

Zakaria said what Dr Mahathir had done were justifiably above board and in accordance with international laws.

Misuari, who was arrested by Malaysian authorities on Sabah's Jampiras Island offshore Sandakan for illegal entry on Nov 24 with seven followers, was sent back to the Phillipines on Jan 7.

-- BERNAMA

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