

## **Batu Puteh RCI presents final report to Agong**

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**Bernamea**

The Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) tasked with reviewing the handling of matters related to the sovereignty of Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks, and South Ledge presented its final report to Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar.

A post on Sultan Ibrahim's official Facebook page stated that the RCI chairperson Md Raus Sharif, along with other commission members, presented the report to the king at Istana Negara today.

In February, the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department announced that Sultan Ibrahim had consented to the establishment of the commission.

Subsequently, the RCI was established in accordance with the Commissions of Enquiry Act 1950 (Act 119).

On May 23, 2008, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Singapore

holds sovereignty over Batu Puteh, while Middle Rocks, situated less than 1km away, belongs to Malaysia.

The ICJ ruled that the ownership of South Ledge, located approximately 4km from Batu Puteh, would be determined based on the delimitation of territorial waters.

On Feb 2, 2017, Malaysia filed an application to review the ICJ's ruling.

However, in May 2018, the Pakatan Harapan government, led by the then-prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, withdrew the application two weeks before it was scheduled to be heard on June 11, 2018.

On Feb 27, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Azalina Othman Said stated that the purpose of establishing the RCI was to seek resolution and improve issues related to national sovereignty, rather than to assign blame to any party.

Azalina emphasised that Malaysians, particularly the people of Johor, deserve a clear explanation of the reasons and factors behind the decision not to pursue the application for review and request for interpretation at the ICJ, regarding the sovereignty of Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks, and South Ledge.

On June 12, Mahathir testified during closed RCI proceedings.

- Bernama

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