

Government Mulls Ending Operation Daulat
Bernama
25 June, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, June 25 (Bernama) - The government will consider ending Operation Daulat if the Eastern Sabah Safety Zone (Esszone) supervised by the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM) and the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) is effective in safeguarding the country's sovereignty.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said it will be explored during his visit to Lahad Datu this Saturday with Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and former inspector-general of police Tan Sri Ismail Omar.

"Before making any decision, we will check the situation because the invasion by militants from southern Philippines in Lahad Datu in February is a 'wake up call' for us.

"Therefore, any decision to terminate the operation is dependent on the situation in Esszone," he told a press conference at the Defence Ministry here, Tuesday.

Esszone established on March 7 to protect the sovereignty and security of the Sabah east coast covers Kudat, Tawau, Kunak, Sandakan and Lahad Datu districts.

It followed the intrusion in Kampung Tanduo, Lahad Datu, Sabah on Feb 11 but negotiations with the terrorists failed when they decided to stay and fight.

On March 5, the ATM and PDRM launched Operation Daulat to flush out the group killing 68 terrorists from southern Philippines.

On the Malaysian side, eight policemen and two soldiers were killed in the incident.

Some 173 people were detained under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma) while another 443 were detained for various offences.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2013 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=958867>