

Pulau Batu Puteh: Singapore To Reply Malaysia's Bid By June 14

PUTRAJAYA, May 15 (Bernama) -- Singapore is expected to reply Malaysia's bid to review the 2008 International Court of Justice (ICJ) decision on Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge by June 14.

Malaysia's Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali said once the application was received, a team of international and local experts led by him, "will see what it is" and respond to the matter accordingly.

He said the review of the ICJ's decision on Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge was going on well.

"I have five researchers who are working everyday in London, going through thousands of documents in the archive. They are still doing their work right now," he told reporters when asked on the status of the review application, after opening the 17th ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM), here, today.

On Feb 2, Malaysia applied to revise the international court's ruling that granted Pulau Batu Puteh to Singapore following the discovery of evidence among some 3,000 documents, which were declassified by the British Government in 2013 that could help the case.

On May 23, 2008, the ICJ ruled that Singapore had sovereignty over Pulau Batu Puteh, which is about 7.7 nautical miles from Tanjung Penyusuh beach, Johor.

Mohamed Apandi had said that Malaysia had found evidence among some 3,000 documents, which were declassified by the British Government in 2013 that could help the country's case.

On another development, Mohamed Apandi said the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) was expected to wrap up the investigation into the money that flowed from SRC International into the prime minister's bank account, within a month or earlier.

Reiterating that he had never ordered the investigation to be stopped, Apandi said if there was new evidence that warranted a file to be reopened, the case could be investigated again.

"No further action (NFA) is a normal terminology used by the prosecution to show no further action at the material time. It means that if there is new evidence or any development, we can reopen whatever investigation. Not necessary on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), but all cases," he said.

In his opening speech, Mohamed Apandi said ASEAN members should pay tribute to ASLOM for its role in the establishment of communication channels and programmes which had been the essential elements in providing connectivity and networking opportunities among members of the ASEAN civil service and legal community on the ground.

He said that ASLOM's relevance could be demonstrated through its engagement in non-traditional security issues threatening regional stability such as foreign terrorists and radicalisation, challenges posed by cross-border trade and movement of persons, and the impact of climate change on ASEAN economies and the people's livelihood.

Mohamed Apandi said ASLOM could be commended for its many success stories, and most notably was its work in mutual assistance in combating transnational crime which included the 2004 conclusion and universal ratification of the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Among Like-Minded ASEAN Member Countries.

ASEAN law officials had also been the key movers behind the conclusion and recent entry into force of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, he added.

Malaysia is hosting the 17th ASLOM from May 14 to 17.

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