

## 'Malaysia must take leaf from Pulau Batu Puteh case'

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Wan Junaidi accompanied by the director of the southern maritime region First Admiral Adon Shalan (second right) during his visit at the Middle Rocks and surrounding water.

— Bernama photo

KOTA TINGGI: The decision of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in favour of Singapore in the claim over Pulau Batu Puteh prior to this must be a lesson to Malaysia to always look after its territory and rights based on three criteria.

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tunku Jaafar said the criteria were presence, dominance and enforcement which were among the most important elements in defending the sovereign rights of Malaysia over international disputes.

He said Malaysia's loss in the claim case was due to the mistake of the government itself which, according to him, did not see and emphasised on the criteria prior to this and could not be blamed on any quarters.

"In the decision which was made, there are several matters of which we take a lesson from, namely, we must look after our property, although it is only a piece of rock it indicates part of our territory.

"We must have a presence which shows we are there, dominance which proves our capability in defending the area and enforcement which shows we have the facilities and marine personnel in the area as representative of the government," he said.

Wan Junaidi said this to reporters after visiting Middle Rocks and its surrounding waters here yesterday.

He said that taking into account the same problem might occur in future, he had directed the Department of Survey and Mapping (JUPEM) director-general Datuk Mohd Noor Isa to organise a round table discussion with all the related agencies as soon as possible.

He said the discussion would focus on efforts to obtain reports or summaries to improve the mapping of the national territory other than thinking up efforts that must be done in defending Malaysia's rights on disputed areas at international level.

"The discussion will be participated by the National Security Council, Royal Malaysia Navy, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency and relevant experts on the matter so that their conclusion could be forwarded to the government for action," he said.

On the visit, Wan Junaidi explained that it was aimed at obtaining a real picture on the current situation at Middle Rocks and its surrounding waters to look at the interests of Malaysia and boost activities to continue expressing and defending national sovereignty.

In another development, touching on the landslide that occurred at the affordable homes project in Lengkok Lembah Permai, Tanjung Bungah, Penang recently, Wan Junaidi said he could not make an early conclusion on the actual cause of the incident. — Bernama