

28 MAR 1997

LEAD Mahathir-Singapore

REPORTS ON M'SIA FREEZING TIES WITH S'PORE NOT TRUE, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today media reports that Malaysia has frozen fresh bilateral dealings with Singapore are not true.

RTM, in its 8pm news bulletin, reported the prime minister as saying this to reporters at the end of his visit to Osaka, Japan.

According to the bulletin, Dr Mahathir also said that Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had contacted him yesterday and explained that the reports were not true.

"He did not say that," the prime minister said when asked to comment on medical reports yesterday that the Cabinet, at its weekly meeting on Wednesday, had decided to freeze fresh bilateral dealings with Singapore following the diplomatic row precipitated by Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew's disparaging remarks on Johor.

The Cabinet meeting was chaired by Anwar because Dr Mahathir was then in Japan for an official visit.

"There is no freeze, nothing is frozen," Dr Mahathir said today.

He said the report gave the impression that Malaysia was deliberately going to take action against Singapore.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Mustapha, who is acting Foreign Minister, in a statement yesterday, confirmed that the Cabinet had discussed several issues pertaining to Malaysia's relations with Singapore.

However, he stressed that the mass media reports on the relations were "inaccurate" and that there was no decision to freeze relations with the republic. -- BERNAMA

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