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MB: Singapore will respect decision

JOHOR BARU, Tues. - Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said today he is confident that Singapore will respect Malaysia's decision not to shift its Customs, Immigration and Quarantine checkpoint from Tanjung Pagar to Woodlands.

He said that the existing arrangements should be maintained and the people of both countries could continue to benefit from the railway service.

"We fully support the decision of the Federal Government and the understanding long established between the two countries," he said after receiving business zakat collection from Bank Rakyat, here.

He was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Namibia yesterday that Malaysia will not shift its CIQ facilities from Tanjung Pagar to Woodlands.

Last month, Singapore announced its decision to move its CIQ facilities from Tanjung Pagar to Woodlands on Aug 1 and this affected the Malaysian CIQ checkpoint.

Earlier, Abdul Ghani said that the RM86,138.48 business zakat collection would be channelled to religious schools in the State for repair and extension purposes.

In Ipoh, Gerakan Youth today said Singapore was undermining bilateral relations by forcing Malaysia to relocate its CIQ checkpoint and railway station from Tanjung Pagar to Woodlands.

"It is going to be an absurd situation and ultimately it will be the people of Malaysia and Singapore who will suffer," its national youth chief Datuk Chang Ko Youn said.

He said the leaders of the island republic were unfair and unfriendly.

"Singapore's action is undermining good bilateral relations that had been established in the past between the two neighbours," he said.

Chang, who is Perak State Executive Councillor, was also commenting Dr Mahathir's statement.

He said Singapore authorities in the past had imposed restrictions on its citizens like ensuring that their gasoline tanks were three-quarter full before entering Johor.

He said Singapore also refused to allow Malaysians from the peninsula who had worked in that country to withdraw their Central Provident Fund which amounted to RM2 billion.

"On the contrary, Malaysia did not impose conditions to refrain its citizens from shopping in Singapore when the prices of goods were cheaper there," he said.

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