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Kuan Yew-Reaction

KUAN YEW MANIPULATED HISTORY, SAYS SYED HAMID

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- Defence Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew's claim in his memoirs that Malaysia had used "bullying and intimidation" during the two countries' brief federation was a manipulation of history.

"All sorts of old issues were raised, racial sentiments were fanned as if he was the one who determined our history. He is good at manipulating the facts to make them appear as if that was what had actually happened.

"This is manipulation of history and historical facts which I feel is not healthy for a leader who has held the highest post," he said after witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding between his ministry and DRB-Hicom Defence Technologies, here.

Extracts of the former Singapore prime minister's memoirs, which also claimed that Lee still believed that Malaysia could use the water issue to cow its neighbour, were published in the Singapore Sunday Times last Sunday.

Syed Hamid said that such writing would aggravate instead of ease the strain between the two countries.

He said the way the memoirs were written showed arrogance and a lack of sensitivity for the republic's neighbours.

Syed Hamid's father, Syed Jaafar Albar, the former Umno secretary-general, was one of the Umno leaders accused by Lee in the memoirs of arousing racial passions in Singapore leading to the 1964 riots.

Meanwhile, Gerakan urged Singapore to look forward instead of harping on old sensitive issues regarding its relationship with Malaysia.

"Parti Gerakan urges Singapore to move beyond past issues which continue to "fester like an old wound" and instead to work towards improving bilateral relations," its deputy secretary-general Dr Tan Kee Kwong said in a statement.

In supporting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that Singapore was an insensitive neighbour, Dr Tan said Malaysia was always willing to cooperate with all its immediate neighbours.

DAP deputy chairman Karpal Singh said Lee's decision to have his memoirs published in the wake of recent serious differences with Malaysia was ill-advised.

"Memoirs are usually written by one who has retired and takes the opportunity to mull over and reflect upon the events of the past. Lee Kuan Yew has not retired," he said in a statement.

He said Lee should not have trampled on the sensitivities of Malaysians by accusing Tunku Abdul Rahman of telling the then British High Commissioner on the day Singapore left the Federation that Singapore would be controlled through water supply and other levers of pressure.

Karpal Singh also said that whatever the cause of the racial riots in Singapore in 1964, it should not now be made the subject matter of memoirs "which Lee should perhaps keep to himself".

He said Lee should reflect upon the real reason for Singapore's expulsion from the Federation of Malaysia.

"He may well find he was the cause for Singapore being required to make a political island of itself which in the final analysis, will not be in Singapore's best interests," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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