

04/08/1998

`Statements do not reflect Republic's true stance'

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BANDAR TENGGARA, Mon. - Umno Youth feels that recent statements by Singapore Foreign Affairs Minister S. Jayakumar and Home Affairs Minister Wong Kan Seng did not reflect the republic's sincere stance.

This was in apparent reference to Singapore's handling of its shifting the Customs, Immigration and Quarantine checkpoint for train passengers to Woodlands from the Tanjong Pagar railway station on Aug 1, a decision the republic had made unilaterally, among other issues.

The Umno Youth also proposed today that the Government consider supplying only treated water to Singapore after the expiry of two water agreements between the countries in 2011 and 2061 respectively.

These proposals were contained in a four-page statement read here by its chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, after the State-level launch of Tunas Bestari project by Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak.

Also present were Umno Youth deputy head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Johor Umno Youth chief Hasni Mohammad.

In its statement, the Umno Youth urged the Government to be firm in defending its position on issues related to bilateral ties.

Saying that Umno Youth would continue to give undivided support to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, it hoped the various problems with Singapore could be tackled intelligently, sincerely and responsibly.

"This is in line with the spirit of agreement reached between Dr Mahathir and Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong during their meeting early this year.

"Six issues had been agreed upon to be solved, which are co-operation in economy and finance, water supply to Singapore, Keretapi Tanah Melayu's land in Singapore, the Pulau Batu Putih issue, co-operation in tourism and the formation of Malaysia-Singapore Business Council."

The Umno Youth felt contentious issues, such as the shifting of Singapore's CIQ complex to Woodlands, water supply, coverage by the Singapore media on the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and contributions to Singapore's Central Provident Fund by Malaysians working in the republic needed to be resolved in the best possible manner.

On water supply to Singapore, the Umno Youth hoped that the Government would fix more realistic period and reasonable price to avoid it from becoming a burden to the future generation.

At the same time, Umno Youth stressed to the people of Singapore that Malaysia, which upheld the principles of values, courtesy and spirit of neighbourliness, would continue to guard and value its friendship with other countries.

It said Malaysia had been supplying water to Singapore not to reap profit, but on the realisation that water was a basic necessity.

The statement also said Umno Youth was confident that Malaysia would continue to accord attention to other priorities, with due focus to the nation's Vision 2020.

On the republic's on-going multi-media presentation entitled `Singapore Story', shown as part of the republic's National Day celebrations, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman noted that the show portrayed Umno and the Malay community in a negative light.

"It was done in bad taste. It would only serve to sow seeds of fear and hate among the republic's people against Malaysia."

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