

PM, Lee to discuss package

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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia and Singapore are expected to agree on five key issues when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad meets the republic's Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew here this week.

The issues, to be discussed as a package deal, include withdrawals from Singapore's Central Provident Fund involving Malaysians from the peninsula working in the republic, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar told reporters yesterday.

He said other matters to

be discussed in the bilateral talks between the Prime Minister and the republic's former premier are the relocation of the Malaysian Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) facility from Tanjung Pagar; Malaysian-owned railway land in Singapore; the request for a new water agreement with Malaysia; and the request to use Malaysian air space by the republic's air force.

The issues were made into a package to ensure that they could all be discussed simultaneously and resolved

together instead of "resolving one issue and having to resume talks on another," he said at his ministry's Family Day celebrations at the Sunway Lagoon theme park here.

Malaysia had sent its proposals to conclude the package and Singapore has responded with its own proposals, he said.

Lee, accompanied by an entourage which includes two ministers and several young leaders of the republic, arrived here yesterday for a four-day visit.

"We find that both coun-

tries are open to negotiations and want to conclude agreements on these issues so that we can concentrate on other areas of bilateral relations," Syed Hamid said.

On the CPF issue, he said Malaysia wanted the republic to allow workers from Peninsular Malaysia to withdraw their savings from the fund when they left Singapore.

This privilege, at the moment, is accorded to Malaysian workers from Sabah and Sarawak.

"If they can allow it for Malaysians from the two

states, then they should accord the same treatment to other Malaysians. They should treat us as a whole country," he said.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia and Singapore wanted to forge closer ties between their current and future leaders.

"Past leaders had a good relationship despite their differences in opinions. Likewise, when the new leaders take over the government, they should, by then, already know their counterparts across the causeway," he said.

With regards to a reported move by the Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia (KMM) to form a regional league with underground fundamentalists from Indonesia and the Philippines, Syed Hamid said the three countries got wind of this due to their close relationships and were exchanging information to confirm this move.

He said the league was supposed to be formed on the basis that KMM's actions could be synchronised in all three countries.