

# New package of issues to settle with Singapore

SUBANG, Wed: Malaysia is working on a new settlement package for discussion with Singapore to resolve various issues involving relations between the two countries.

The prime minister said today the government already has the ideas and the new formula for the package.

"Singapore does not want us to negotiate through the press, so we respect it," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said at the RMAF base before leaving for an official visit to Russia, Germany and Poland.

Asked if the new package includes land issues, he said: "All the issues are in one package, we'll add the new things that come up."

However, he did not specify whether the issue of Singapore's land reclamation in Pulau Tekong, which has drawn protests from various parties in Malaysia, is included in the package.

Asked about the new price that Malaysia is asking for the water that it supplies to Singapore, Mahathir told Bernama: "That we'll inform Singapore."

He said the price of three sen for every 1,000 gallons of raw water that Malaysia supplies to Singapore now is unreasonable, (one gallon=.5 litre). Malaysia supplies 350 million gallons of raw water a day to Singapore which sells back 37 million gallons of treated water to Johor at 50 sen per 1,000 gallons.

Asked whether the land reclamation issue can be resolved, Mahathir said it can if there is goodwill from both sides.

He said Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who met him on

Monday, had given an assurance that the republic would consider Malaysia's objections on the matter. Lee is on a four-day visit to Malaysia.

"At first they rejected (our) claims that there are problems but now they concede that they will consider it when we submit our objections," he said.

The issue surfaced last week when Malaysia expressed concerns that the reclamation might narrow the waterway separating the two countries and affect the ecology and livelihood of fishermen.

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