

Singapore urged to

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PETALING JAYA, Sun. — Singapore should suspend its land reclamation work in Pulau Tekong until Malaysia's objections to the project are resolved, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said.

He said the republic should do this if it appreciated its long-standing relationship with Malaysia.

Syed Hamid said points of concern raised by Kuala Lumpur via a note to the Singapore Government were sufficient grounds for a suspension.

"There are enough details for

them to stop work because the observation includes initial studies that have been made.

"We have stated our concerns very specifically and they could actually react positively but they don't want to. Instead, they want to wait for our technical findings," he said.

Syed Hamid, who is also president of the Malaysian Association of Youth Clubs, was speaking at a Press conference after opening the Selangor MAYC annual general meeting today.

Agreeing on the need for a thorough technical analysis by both sides on the extent of the impact (of the reclamation), he said Singapore

could be more practical by temporarily halting work while studies were being completed.

"The technical part is one thing but there is the obvious physical part that can be realised by purely looking at the issue because there is definitely the narrowing of the sea lane, stronger underwater currents and the effects on the movements of ships to our ports... which are of grave concern to us.

"That is why we have repeatedly stated that while we're looking at resolving the issue, the reclamation work should stop because the technical analysis would take time," he said.

Syed Hamid said the technical

suspend reclamation

analysis, environmental impact assessments and hydrographic studies being conducted in the area could go either way.

"If the various studies justify Kuala Lumpur's concerns, then it would be too late as damage would have been done," he said, adding that Singapore was however holding fast to its contention that the reclamation was its right.

Kuala Lumpur, Syed Hamid said, agreed that the work was being carried out in Singapore's territory but it should not affect Malaysia's interests in any way.

The Foreign Minister expressed the hope that the feeling of mutuality and accommodation will prevail

on the island republic's part.

"After all, we are very close neighbours and a lot of things are entwined between us, so why can't we take the position of good neighbours.

"I think we cannot go on having differences from time to time, we have to move forward in our relationship... That is why Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had stressed the need for Singapore to look at things from the proper perspective," he said.

He said Malaysia was going all out to find a solution, but this should not be misinterpreted in any way.

"We are always looking for solu-

tions. We are being reasonable. We understand the importance of exercising restraint when confronted with problems, but we are not giving up what we consider are our rights."

Asked about the possibility of another meeting between the Prime Ministers of both nations, Syed Hamid said the "package of issues" could be resolved soon as there were positive signs from across the Causeway.

The package includes water supply, Keretapi Tanah Melayu's land in Singapore, CPF withdrawals and facilities for low-flying fighter jets over Peninsular Malaysia.

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