

# Singapore praises BN's recipe for national development

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**SINGAPORE, Tues.** — The Singapore Government today gave the thumbs up for its Barisan Nasional-led Malaysian counterpart's recipe for national development, while placing its confidence in the ruling coalition to successfully snuff out Pas' resurgence in the Malay political arena.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who called on Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong today, said Lee told him that Singapore was at ease dealing with cross-Causeway matters with the present Malaysian Government.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visionary leadership also came in for praise, with the emphasis on information technology and the usage of English in schools highlighted as part of the progressive policies implemented for national development.

"Lee said our policies are clear and progressive and bring great development and that Dr Mahathir's leadership is very forward-looking and focused on global issues," he said.

Pas' influence on Malaysian politics was also raised during the 45-minute meeting, leaving Muhyiddin to allay Lee's concern by explaining the comprehensive strategies outlined by the BN in curtailing the Opposition party's negative tactics to gain voter support.

"Lee said he was comfortable dealing with the present leadership, and stated his hopes of seeing BN successfully tackle the problem

posed by Pas which uses underhanded methods in order to gain public support.

"I told him that we will tighten existing election legislations and convince the Malay voters of Pas' ploys through information programmes at the grassroots level and by increasing our Islamic education programmes."

Muhyiddin said Lee was informed that the public, especially in Terengganu, had begun to be wary of Pas' overtures to gain support, and were aware of Pas' failure to practise good governance in the State it captured from BN during the 1999 general election.

"We are concerned about the unhealthy political trend practised by Pas, but there has been a noticeable swing by the Malay voters towards supporting Umno again," he said.

The meeting with Lee also saw the discussion of Singapore's economic woes and the steps taken to improve the situation.

"Lee talked about the economic situation of Singapore, the challenges and uncertainty it faces and the implications on the Southeast Asian atmosphere as a result of this."

Muhyiddin acknowledged that the relationship between both countries was frequently riddled with contentious issues such as the dispute over the price of water supplied to Singapore from Johor and the reclamation works undertaken by the republic.

"However, we must continue to work together. These are actually rather small problems if you look at the bigger picture."