

Water facts

STAR 13.7.2003

Ad drive to reveal truth about talks with Singapore

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia starts a media campaign today to counter claims by Singapore that it was stalling talks with the republic over the water issue.

The campaign will involve a series of advertisements and a booklet to denounce misconceptions and allegations made by the Singapore Government in its publication, *Water Talks? If Only It Could*.

In the publication, issued by the republic's Information, Communication and Arts Ministry, Malaysia is accused of "shifting goalposts" on negotiations over bilateral issues.

Letters exchanged between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, documents exchanged between the two countries and speeches made by Singapore Foreign Minister S. Jayakumar in Parliament are included in that book.

Malaysian leaders had reacted strongly against the contents of the publication but Dr Mahathir said early this month that the Government would not disclose letters written in confidence by the leaders of the two countries.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia would give its version of the issue in the newspapers and explain every point. The Government, he stressed, would follow strictly to international practices of not displaying the private

■ Turn to Page 3

Everyone needs to know the

truth, STAR 13.7.2003 says NEAC

■ From Page 1

letters to the people.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar had agreed that the true picture that Singapore was the one which was unfair and unreasonable should be presented.

The National Economic Action Committee (NEAC), which is spearheading the media drive, said this was being done to inform the public of the actual situation of the discussions between Malaysia and Singapore.

"Malaysians, Singaporeans and foreigners need to know the factual truth," said NEAC executive director Datuk Mustapa Mohamad.

"This is our intention in publishing the advertisements and the booklet," he added.

"The (NEAC) advertisements and booklet will highlight the fact that what we have been asking for is a fair price for our water, instead of the current ridiculous price of three sen per 1,000 gallons.

"The advertisements and booklet will also reveal that Singapore has been making huge sums of money from the water it gets from Johor." Mustapa said. (See ad on Page 13)