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Mahathir spells out subjudice to S'pore

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will consider sending a protest note to Singapore for continuing with land reclamation at Tuas and Pulau Tekong although the case is pending at the international court.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday Singapore will not understand that its action is subjudice even if Malaysia points it out.

"I don't know why they continue with the reclamation work. Perhaps they think it is pending court decision," he said.

"Even if we tell them it is subjudice, they do not understand all that because our leadership is run by a doctor, and theirs by a lawyer."

Berita Harian had reported on Saturday that Singapore had ignored Malaysia's objections and continued with reclamation work at Pulau Tekong in the Johor Straits, and Tuas on the southwestern tip of the island.

This is despite the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, which is reportedly expected to deliver a verdict this week.

The report said works are in full swing and fishermen in the area had claimed that "big ships" are being mobilised to ferry millions of tonnes of sand to the site.

Mahathir was speaking to reporters at the F1 Powerboat World Championship Malaysian Grand Prix 2003 at the Mines Resort City in Seri Kembangan.

He said the event is a plus for the country's tourism as it helps to promote Malaysia as an attractive tourist destination and safe place for foreign visitors.

Mahathir also said he believes that the new leadership under Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will continue to promote such international sporting events.