

## **Batu Puteh RCI Malaysia's internal matter, says S'pore Foreign Ministry**

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**Bernama**

The Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) set up to examine matters related to the sovereignty case of Pedra Branca (Pulau Batu Puteh), Middle Rocks, and South Ledge “is an internal matter of Malaysia”, said the republic’s Foreign Ministry.

“We do not see this affecting the good bilateral relations between Singapore and Malaysia,” its spokesperson said in response to media queries yesterday.

Malaysia’s Chief Secretary to the Government Mohd Zuki Ali had said the establishment of the RCI was in line with the Commissions of Enquiry Act 1950 (Act 119), whereby the proposed membership of the commission would be brought for the approval of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

“The members of the commission will comprise experts who have vast experience in judicial and legal affairs and public administration as well as capable of undertaking the investigation transparently, fairly, and impartially to prevent any issues involving conflict of interest with the related parties,” he said in a statement on Wednesday (Jan 24).

In 2008, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) decided that Batu Puteh belonged to Singapore, Middle Rocks to Malaysia, and South Ledge to the state in the territorial waters in which it is located.

Malaysia applied to the ICJ requesting an interpretation of the judgment in 2017. However, in 2018, the Dr Mahathir Mohamad-led administration withdrew an application to overturn the ICJ ruling awarding legal jurisdiction of Batu Puteh to Singapore – a move that has raised numerous questions.

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