

# Singapore should apologise: Syed Hamid

KUALA LUMPUR: Singapore, as a good neighbour, should apologise to Malaysia for the recent remarks by its Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew that the Chinese community in Malaysia is being marginalised.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said yesterday Malaysia deserved an apology from Singapore for the remarks, which caused concern among Malaysian leaders.

"They should (apologise) for the sake of the two supposedly good neighbouring countries, they should do that," he told reporters after a meeting of the Umno Supreme Council here.

"That statement went beyond fair comment, describing something that is far from true in our country, an instigation. So I think with all honesty, it should be polite for them to say they are sorry."

At a forum in Singapore

on Sept 15, Lee had said that Malaysia and Indonesia "have problems with the Chinese. They are successful, they are hardworking and, therefore, they are being systematically marginalised".

He also said the two countries "want Singapore, to put it simply, to be like their Chinese - compliant".

Syed Hamid also confirmed that Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia Ashok Mukar Mirpuri met Foreign Ministry secretary-general Datuk Rastam Isa yesterday.

"We called (him), we want to know exactly the nature of the statement (is). We have given our views and how we feel about it. So we wait for his response. Subsequently, we will decide what action is to be taken," he said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has sent a letter to the Singapore government seeking an

explanation over Lee's remarks which, he said, could cause racial tension. - Bernama