

by

# AB Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

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Nikko Hotel, Kuala Lumpur



NEW MAG: Dr Mahathir receiving a memento from VC Publications Sdn Bhd chairman Datuk Rejal Arbee at the official launch of of EDU Smith magazine in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

## Mahathir happy 22-year wait for bridge is over

*The Star - 27/1/2006*

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is "very happy" that finally a decision has been made for Malaysia to go ahead with the scenic bridge on its side of the Johor Strait.

The former prime minister is also not surprised that Singapore has not agreed to jointly build the bridge to replace the Causeway.

"I have waited 22 years, and we still have not gotten the permission to even raise (the price of raw water sold to Singapore) from 3 sen to 4 sen. So if you want to wait, you can wait until kingdom come," he told reporters yesterday after launching *EduSmith*, a local magazine for students.

It was reported yesterday that Malaysia would build the bridge, and work would start after the Chinese New Year.

The report also said that the

bridge would now be referred to as "scenic" bridge instead of "crooked bridge". The bridge was termed "crooked" because of its shape. It will be built only on the Malaysian side.

In jest, Dr Mahathir said: "I thought it was 'cynic' bridge. Is that how you spell it?"

Malaysia and Singapore have had their share of differences over issues such as water, the bridge, overlapping territorial claims and CPF money belonging to Malaysians.

Relations have improved since Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi became Prime Minister, with the leaders of the two countries meeting more often and playing golf together.

"I think the ties are extremely good now," said Dr Mahathir. "I didn't play golf with them. If I play golf, I would have played with them. But I am not very

good at golf," he joked.

On Proton, Dr Mahathir who is the advisor said it was up to the national carmaker to decide if it wanted to forge an alliance with Mitsubishi, now that talks with Volkswagen have collapsed, and that he had nothing to do with it.

On his role as advisor: "I don't give advice anymore. They didn't ask for advice. They just informed me (about Mitsubishi)."

He said he did not know if Proton was also courting other foreign partners besides Mitsubishi.

Dr Mahathir said he knew very little about Proton now, and it was only from what he read in the newspapers.

"The price of the (Proton) shares has come down by almost RM4. I think people don't have confidence."