

# Abdullah, Hsien Loong to meet in Langkawi

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**KOTA TINGGI:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his Singapore counterpart, Lee Hsien Loong, are scheduled to go on a "retreat" in Langkawi on May 15.

There will be no set agenda for the meeting, and the two leaders are expected to use the informal atmosphere to discuss ways to cement bilateral ties and seek methods to settle outstanding sensitive issues, away from the public eye.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said ties between both countries were "at their best" and Singapore had always been interested to improve economic and political co-operation with Malaysia, regardless of outstanding issues.

"But we must find new approaches to settle these issues in a cordial atmosphere, though they are not the basis for the meeting. It is a chance for both leaders to meet and talk without the pressures of an agenda," Syed Hamid said yesterday.

Aside from political and economic ties, Syed Hamid said the two prime ministers will discuss the Iskandar Development Region and the upcoming Asean summit in Singapore.

Syed Hamid said the May 15 retreat was first suggested to him by Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo at a meeting in the Philippines earlier this year.