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NEW STRAITS TIMES

DATE: 27/8/2009

## Dr M: Muhyiddin spoke truth about S'pore

NST- 27/8/2009

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has admitted that he had persuaded Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin to supply water to Singapore when the latter was the Johor menteri besar.

"Tan Sri Muhyiddin spoke the truth about my persuading him to supply water to Singapore but Lee Kuan Yew did not threaten to go to war if we did not supply water. If he had done that, I think I would have stopped any further supply," Dr Mahathir said in an article posted on his blog yesterday.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on Muhyiddin's statement on Aug 19 that Dr Mahathir had summoned Muhyiddin to attend a meeting with the visiting then Singapore prime minister over gas

pipeline and water supply issues.

Muhyiddin had said that during the meeting between Dr Mahathir, the then finance minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, Lee and him, the Singapore prime minister had pressed for adequate water supply to the republic from Johor.

Lee had expressed his regret over the stalled water supply project from Sungai Lingu, Muhyiddin had said.

"I said we did not have the money and Lee said Singapore was willing to bear the cost and, when completed, the assets would be owned by Malaysia, so Singapore had merely footed the bill."

Muhyiddin had said this at a ceramah in Tanjung Putus, Bukit Mertajam, during the campaign in the Permatang Pasir state by-elec-

tion to clarify allegations by the opposition that he (Muhyiddin) had sold land to Singapore in connection with the water treatment plant in Sungai Lingu, Bandar Tenggara, Johor.

Dr Mahathir said in his article he did not know about the sale of land to Singapore but as it was agreed that a treatment plant be built by Singapore in Johor, land would have to be made available.

"We were trying to be friendly with Singapore to solve several problems. Although raw water would be supplied at three sen per 1,000 gallons, the understanding was that in future, only treated water would be supplied when our treatment plants would be ready.

"We would also not buy any more treated water from Singa-

pore at 50 sen per thousand gallons when our new treatment plant in Johor is ready.

"When we no longer needed to buy treated water from Singapore, we could raise the price of raw water to Singapore without Singapore being able to raise the price of treated water to us.

"However, when we concluded the water supply agreement, Singapore raised a lot of issues regarding our railway land, the CIQ (Customs, Immigration and Quarantine) at Tanjong Pagar, training flights by Singapore warplanes over Malaysia and the Central Provident Fund.

"At that stage, I realised that being friendly with Singapore did not pay," Dr Mahathir added. — Bernama