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AIRSPACE AND TERRITORIAL WATERS ROW

'DISPUTES TO BE RESOLVED VIA TALKS'

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Dr M says differences with Singapore will be settled based on legal provisions, rights

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THE row over airspace and territorial waters between Malaysia and Singapore will be resolved through talks, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He added that differences with Singapore over maritime borders would be settled based on legal provisions and rights.

"The important thing is that Singapore agrees to a negotiation. So until we finish with our negotiations, we cannot give our final answer (on the issue).

"We will settle any disputes based on legal provisions and our

rights," he said after chairing Pakatan Harapan's Presidential Council meeting here.

He was asked to comment on the developments and measures to be taken by the government on the two issues, which had caused tension between neighbours.

Malaysia had urged Singapore to immediately withdraw its Port Marine Circular issued on Nov 30 and order its enforcement agencies not to intrude into Malaysia's territorial waters and harass its vessels that were lawfully permitted to be present.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said the actions by Singapore amounted to serious violations of Malaysia's sovereignty and international law.

He said such actions were also not conducive to good bilateral relations, which could confuse the international shipping community and lead to increased navigational and safety risks.

However, on Friday, Singapore rejected Malaysia's proposal for both countries to cease and desist from sending assets into the disputed area.

Its Foreign Affairs Ministry, however, said Singapore "remains ready to discuss this issue with Malaysia in a constructive manner in the spirit of preserving our important bilateral relationship".

Malaysia and Singapore had also been engaged in a row over the new instrument Landing System at Seletar Airport.

Malaysia has proposed to discuss the matter with the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore on counterproposals and measures to resolve the issue.