

Kadir Jasin hopes for resolution of Malaysia-Singapore issues under Mahathir's premiership

BERNAMA

24/04/2019

By Massita Ahmad

SINGAPORE, April 24 (Bernama) -- A close aide of Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here Wednesday he wishes to see all bilateral issues between Malaysia and Singapore resolved under Dr Mahathir's second premiership.

Datuk A. Kadir Jasin, the special advisor on media and communications to the Malaysian prime minister, said "let us iron out ... if possible, let us get rid altogether of those areas that are causing discomfort in the relationship between the two countries and get on with business".

He was responding to a question at a seminar on 'Challenges Facing the New Malaysia' organised by the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. A question was raised as to what was happening as after Dr Mahathir took the helm (as the prime minister) for the second time, a few bilateral issues surfaced, among them those on airspace, maritime border as well as the 1962 water agreement.

Kadir said there is nothing to be worried about this development.

"Perhaps, this is an unnecessary, unwanted, uninstructed reaction to the change of government in Kuala Lumpur, to take it in a broad, simplistic manner," he said.

According to him, the government at the highest level, Dr Mahathir in particular, recognised it.

"He is a very shrewd economic administrator. He knows. He could be making noise about

airspace, coastal waters, and cheap raw Malaysian water to Singapore but that is politics.

“Malaysia is a very vibrant political environment. If you don’t talk, people think you are dead already or you are not interested. Malaysian politicians have to talk every day,” he said.

Kadir noted that the posturing against Singapore “is as old as history probably”.

“I’m not so worried about it. But what I’m more interested in is whether Malaysia and Singapore can be a little bit more gentlemanly in our relationship. Be a little bit more open ... less gung-ho ... less territorial ... less nationalistic,” he said.

Kadir pointed out that Singapore is Malaysia’s second biggest trading partner and “it is the reality”.

Touching on the 1962 water agreement, Kadir said: “I suppose we should forget about this quarrel about the last water agreement. Think of a new one.”

Kadir noted that “it is dangerous for Malaysia and Singapore to look at their relationship based on written words”.

“I think it is better for us to look at what is going to happen in the future.”

To another question, also on Malaysia-Singapore relations, Kadir said that now both sides can really talk as equals.

Citing the recent meeting between Dr Mahathir and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the 9th Malaysia-Singapore Leaders’ Retreat in Putrajaya, Kadir said: “To me, the one big success is nothing negative coming out of that.”

-- BERNAMA

© 2018 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Security Policy](#)

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/en/news.php?id=1719840>