

NST-15/7/2006

CROOKED BRIDGE ISSUE

Confidential documents released to rebut Tun Dr M's allegations

Correspondence between Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and former Singapore prime ministers Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong, as well as extracts of the record of the meeting between Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Goh in Kuala Lumpur in March 2005, have been made public so the people can have the full story.

This is only the second time in recent history that documents under the Official Secrets Act (OSA) have been made public....

DECLASSIFIED

WHAT THE OFFICIAL RECORDS TELL

1

DISCUSSIONS with Singapore on the airspace issue are not new and were not mooted by the current Government under Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself included this as a trade-off and as part of the package of issues to be resolved with Singapore during negotiations from 1998 to 2002.

This is evident from Dr M's letter to Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew on March 4, 2002. The same issue was raised by Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong during a meeting with Abdullah on March 1, 2005.

This nullifies Dr M's allegation that it was the present administration that offered SAF jets use of Malaysian airspace.

2

THE sale of sand to Singapore was raised by the Republic during a meeting between Abdullah and Goh Chok Tong on March 1, 2005.

This nullifies argument that the Government put the issue of sand on the negotiating table.

>> REPORTS AND EXTRACTS OF THE DECLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS: P2/4/6/7

3

THE Attorney-General's Chambers strongly advised that Malaysia should not proceed to build a bridge unilaterally without complying with legal obligations.

The main obstacle was that the construction of the crooked bridge would involve the demolition of the Malaysian side of the Johor Causeway. This would directly affect the water pipelines, the ownership of which vests with the Public Utilities Board of Singapore.

Under the 1961 and 1962 Johor-Singapore Water Agreements, "Malaysia is required to obtain approval of PUB in relation to the alteration of water pipelines as a result of the construction of a full straight bridge or a scenic half-

bridge."

The provisions of the Wayleave Agreements, which are applicable to the water pipelines straddling the Causeway, are not applicable to the water pipeline located inside the Causeway. These facts nullify the allegation that the water pipeline located inside the Johor Causeway could be relocated unilaterally after giving six months' notice to Singapore.

Declassification of the bridge documents is part of a series in the Government's explanation of several issues to the people.



Datuk Seri Najib Razak

CONCLUSION: Malaysia wanted the bridge, Singapore did not