

Singapore Ready To Work With Malaysia : Kuan Yew

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SINGAPORE, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- Former Singapore prime minister Lee Kuan Yew said the island republic is ready to work with Malaysian leaders to move forward together.

He said the two countries would benefit from their closer ties and cooperation although Malaysia would gain more than its neighbour in the long term.

Lee, who now holds the post of Minister Mentor, made this point at Singapore's Institute of Policy Studies conference here, according to the Singapore-based Asian news television network, Channel News Asia tonight.

Lee was asked whether Singapore needed to have a hinterland, which is Malaysia, in order to grow into a global city, during the conference today.

Citing Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi's proposal of the Iskandar Development Region (IDR) as a move in the right direction, Lee said Singapore would do what it could to make the IDR succeed.

In this way, Lee said both countries could get maximum value out of the cooperation.

Lee said Singapore welcomed the win-win possibility of having a faster rail and air travel between Singapore and Malaysia after a previous proposal for a fast rail system between them had yet to materialise.

He said initially Singapore would gain a little more because the city-state was more connected to the outside world.

But in the long term, Malaysia would make the bigger gain because of its larger capital mass and bigger human resource pool, Lee said.

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