

# Syed Hamid: Technical study will shed light on floods

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia yesterday steered clear of remarks by Johor blaming Singapore for recent flooding that has caused more than RM425 million in damage.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar downplayed remarks by Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, saying there were "all sorts of possibilities" that had led to the devastation.

"Before we give any view about what triggered the floods and all this sort of thing, we are going to undertake a technical study," Syed Hamid told reporters.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak also had dismissed Ghani's remarks.

The Johor MB had said the recent floods that devastated the state may have been caused by Singapore's land reclamation work on Pulau Tekong opposite the mouth of Sungai Johor.

He had said the reclamation had effectively plugged the mouth of Sungai Johor, causing it to burst its banks after



Kota Tinggi was one of the worst hit areas during the floods in Johor.

torrential rains in January and flood the inland town of Kota Tinggi.

Yesterday, Singapore rejected Ghani's claim.

"The comments are unfounded," Singapore's Ministry of National Development said in a statement.

"This is confirmed by the results from technical studies

that were commissioned separately by both the Malaysian government and the Singapore government," the ministry said.

Last month's floods were the worst to hit the region in nearly 40 years, killing at least 15 and forcing more than 100,000 into emergency shelters.