



## The Impact of Singapore's Military Development on Malaysia's Security

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### Abstract

In this intense era of military and defense development in South East Asia, Singapore has emergence as the fastest country in the development of military capabilities. The rapid military development that started in 1965 has made Singapore become the strongest and finest in military and defense compared to other Southeast Asia nations. Singapore's decision to be independent from Malaysia has forced it to be self-reliant, especially in terms of security and defense. Singapore adopted the approach to develop and strengthen its defense and military system after achieving independence in 1965. Its increasing economic development in 1990 has influenced the military development process and defense system. This rapid expansion has made Singapore emergence as the strongest and most advanced in military capabilities country in the Southeast Asian region. The offensive defense doctrine practiced such as forward defense, poison shrimp, pre-emptive strike and strategic weaponry ownership had raised concerns among leaders in the Southeast Asian countries. At the same time, Malaysia has also taken action to speed up its military development, diversifying the defense doctrine including total defense, complete military with modern and sophisticated defense equipment. It is speculated as a result of the security impact that Malaysia face from Singapore's military development. Hence, this study tries to elaborate the impact or security implications on Malaysia resulting from Singapore's military development from the Malaysian military perspective.

**Keywords:** Military Development, Security threat, Regional security, Strategic defense

### 1. Introduction

The history of the Singapore's military development has essentially been conducted before the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965. However many researchers agree that the military development in Singapore has been conducted during the British rule. According to Huxley (2000:1-4) the initial Singapore's military development was aimed to protect the British's autonomy, in which the latter controlled the island of Singapore as the administration centre particularly in Southeast Asia. The importance of Singapore as an island port had influenced British to build a defense system as a move to protect the island. Since 1927, Singapore has owned system of defense which includes the army, navy and air force. Within 1948-1960, Singapore's military was controlled by two limited battalions, Singapore Infantry Regiment (SIR) and the navy force which is under the Malayan Naval Forces (MNF) base in Woodland, Singapore and the air force which is known as Malayan Auxiliary Air Forces (MAAF). Yet at that period, these defense forces known as SIR, MNF and MAAF are defense forces that were under the authority of the Federation of Malaya.

Singapore has rapidly developed its military forces since 1965 upon its separation from Malaysia, as an independent nation under the leadership of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew (Nasibah Harun, 2005:17). Realizing that in terms of geography condition the nation is small and its defense force is limited, Singapore was forced to rely on British to ensure its security through the establishment of Anglo Malayan Defense Agreement (AMDA) in 1957 and Five Power Defense

Arrangement (FPDA) in 1971 (Chamil Wariya,1989:49; Chin,1983:chapter3&4). During that period Singapore has taken the initiative to draft and build its military and defense system. SIR was changed to Ministry of Interior and Defense at the end of 1960 and the administration of all three arm forces became Singapore Army (SA), Singapore Navy (SN) and Republic Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and placed under one authority called Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). While since 1970 the Ministry of Defense Singapore (MINDEF Singapore) was established and Ministry of Home Affairs was founded to manage the internal affairs (Huxley, 2000:37-40).

## 2. Singapore's Military Development and Defense Process

The right after independence and due to the human resources scarcity in military forces, Singapore has decided to set up a volunteer organization known as People's Defense Forces in 1966 to strengthen the force of 6 battalion army at that time. Singapore also introduced the National Service program base on the national service model applied by Israel in 1967 that obligated 18-year-old citizen or permanent resident to join the National Service. As a result, the total force of Singapore's military doubled to 12 battalions with the increase of 6 more army battalion from the National Service at the beginning of 1972 (Yong,2001:286-288). It is a process to make sure Singapore's objective to form an army of citizen is achieved through the national service program. To ensure that the planning and the defense system are well-built, Singapore has brought in military experts from Israel, Britain and Sweden to train and help develop its military capabilities since 1965 (Hussin Mutalib,2001:41). These experts are responsible in providing the training and planning to Singapore's military officers at the military training institute known as Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute .

During 1965-1975, Singapore implemented the defense doctrine which is defensive through the approach of protecting the country from threats using the deterrence system also knows as the doctrine of *poison shrimp*. This doctrine warns enemies not to take any action that can affect Singapore's security and sovereignty. It depicts the readiness of Singapore to act upon enemies who threaten its security and also popular through the phrase: "eat it and you may die" (Mauzy and Milne,2002:170). After the United State's defeat in Vietnam in 1975, Singapore started to practice a defense doctrine similar to the defense doctrine of Israel which is more offensive in nature and known as preemptive strike (attack before the enemy strikes base on accurate intelligence information) using the air force, land force (amour), landing and mobility. Furthermore, Singapore Armed Force (SAF) received help from Israel Defense Force (IDF) who has introduced the defense doctrine named forward defense that stresses on the importance of air defense development, total military and sustainable defense. At the same time, Singapore has also reinforced its security system by practicing the dependence on superpowers policy to make sure Singapore receives support (Tan,1998:458).

Since 1980, Singapore has made changes in policy and ownership of sophisticated and strategic armaments parallel with the doctrine of defense that it has applied. It too is an approach to ensure the safety and considered as the process to guarantee Singapore's survival. During the 1980s, Singapore has possessed modern weaponry such as 270 light tanks and Main Battle Tanks (MBT), 720 carrier vehicles and artillery cannons 155mm (land), 26 F-5 battle aircrafts and Skyhawk aircrafts, F-16, Bloodhound missile, RBS-70, Rapier, Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) and Airbone Early Warning system type E-2C Hawkeye. Singapore even has successfully produced its own aircraft called Super Skyhawk at the end 1980s. Huxley (2000:459) explained, around 1991 Singapore military power is far more establish compare to Malaysia and Indonesia. Military development in Singapore during 1990s involved the purchase and ownership of weaponry such as light tanks and Main Battle Tanks (MBT), F-16 aircrafts, helicopters, missiles, modern artillery equipment and submarines. Singapore's progress in the field of defense has proven its ability to produce Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) in 1998, making it the first Southeast Asian country to successfully manufacture an IFV. In 2000, Singapore has already diversified its modern defense equipment that was imported from various countries like the United States, Russia, Sweden, Israel and France. Among the weaponry that Singapore possess is 12 AH-64 D Apache Longbow helicopters, 20 F-16 aircrafts and aircrafts with Dassault Aviation Rafale technology.

Singapore has also ordered as many as 6 Frigate La Fayette ships from France and by year 2004 Singapore is scheduled to receive 4 SSK submarine (please refer to the schedule below). Directly this will make Singapore become the strongest and the best navy force in Southeast Asia. According to Tan (1998:459), Singapore's strength at this moment is the best compared to other countries in Southeast Asia. Mazy and Milne (2002:169) said the rapid development and increase on allocation of expenditure has placed Singapore as a Southeast Asian country which owns the best defense and security system in the region of Southeast Asia.

Dibb (1997) stated that a countries RMA process in Southeast Asia is still vague except Singapore's. This is because since 1992 Singapore have started envisioning and directing its military to confront the challenges of the 21st century, parallel to the development of current technology. Realizing the current development of technology and world threats, Singapore have started to take measures in ensuring that the military moves together with technological development and current threat especially when encountering electronic warfare (EW). For example, the widespread usage of electronic combat radio in its military operation has directly shown Singapore's seriousness in applying EW during military operation activities such as survey, disruption and deception of the enemy (Tan,1998:467).

Singapore's seriousness has brought changes in its military RMA and it is visible through the efforts by trying to apply technological advancement that completes high technology military. For example the application of C3I that is to Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence in its military with the use of electronics. It is based on the military's need of adaptation and technological advancement that could strengthen national defense and security system. The C3I application is especially noticeable through the use of electronic equipment in performing military operations including spying or investigating by utilizing the airborne early warning (AEW), unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), with high tech aircraft surveyor, satellite, ground base radar, use to decide target through computer usage, purchase of aircrafts and other high technology defense equipment (Brooke,2004:4-7).

### 3. Malaysia's Concern on Singapore's Military Development

This military development has indirectly raised the concern of Singapore's neighboring countries, Malaysia in particular. Singapore military development is seen as a security threat to Malaysia. Rustam A. Sani (1998:23) stressed bilateral issues between the two countries such as the issue of water, newspaper, border invasion, territorial claims, racial problem and other lingering issues has influenced how Malaysia views the security threats from Singapore. According to Sarimah Othman (1998:15), there were reports in the Malaysian press regarding Singapore actions on the bilateral relation with Malaysia and has the purpose to create a strategic enemy (Malaysia) to achieve a higher purpose. Mohd Zuki Pileh (2003:36) quoted the Malaysia Foreign Minister statement, Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar concerning Singapore's actions regarding the bilateral ties:-

*"They (Singapore) want to show when they separated from Malaysia, they were a small and weak country but now they have the ability to defeat Malaysia. Therefore, Singapore thinks they are more superior"*.

In the 1990s and 2000, Malaysia has started to modernize its armed force to be ready to face any threats from aggressors. Malaysia's Defense Minister, Datuk Sri Najib Tun Razak has stressed that the modernization efforts of Malaysian military will focus on mobility, fire power, increase the amount of battleships and possessing the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) (*Asian Defence Journal*, Oktober 2003:16-23). According to Jayasankaran (2002:20) the Malaysian military development is Malaysia's reaction on Singapore rapid military progress. Malaysia has also taken measures in acquiring weaponry which are multi-function or defensive and offensive in nature. The purchase of FA-18 Hornet aircraft, MIG-29N Fulcrum, Hawk MK108, SU-30MKM, PT-91M tank, Scorpene's submarine, close range missile launcher ASTROS II, G5 MK III, Styer portable rifle among others are Malaysia's military development process to face any security threat (Nasibah Harun,2006:3-6; *Tempur*, July 2003:39-40). Badrul Azhar Rahman (1998) stated that:-

*"Statement of Singapore's Minister of Trade and Industry, Brig Jen. Lee Hsien Loong, that Malay are not allowed to become pilot and hold high rank position in Singapore's military forces because concerned over their loyalty... indicates that Singapore is getting ready for war"*.

Hamdan Hj Abu (2003:10) quoted former Malaysian Prime Minister's statement Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad relating to Singapore's threat on Malaysia's security:-

*"...there is a country (Singapore) who has declared Malaysia as its battlefield...there is a proud country (Singapore) who claimed they have the right to take preemptive strike and forward defense towards our country. We promise if anyone tries to invade our country's independence with action such as preemptive strike or forward defense, they will get what westerners call a bloody nose"*.

### 4. Malaysia's Security Impact Analysis

#### 4.1 Security threat

Singapore's military development and defense system in its early stage was initially defensive in nature, since 1971 Singapore has practiced the poison shrimp doctrine. This doctrine perceived as defense doctrine extracted from the Israel's doctrine of defense which affirms that Singapore warns any aggressor not to attack them. This doctrine takes into account the regional geo-political condition similar to Israel's position which is surrounded by Arab countries. This doctrine is only a warning towards aggressors, however if attacks or threats are thrown at Singapore then the aggressor are forced to face Singapore reaction. The emergence of offensive doctrines known as preemptive strike doctrine is Singapore's preparation to attack the enemy if the enemy is believed (base on accurate intelligence information) to try and threaten its security. Singapore will not attack any country Malaysia in particular, as long as Malaysia does not threaten the security of Singapore. This doctrine is categorized as a need to warn the enemy not to invade or attack Singapore. Hence, to complement the doctrine of preemptive strike, Singapore has implemented another defense doctrine called forward defense whereby the military development and defense must always be advance. This doctrine affects planning and war strategy, hence, Singapore would always need to stay ahead in the development of military in terms of physical and non physical features.

According to Arrifin Omar (2007) Singapore will not attack and threaten Malaysia's national security. It is due to Singapore will take into consideration various aspects, not only from Malaysia's military aspect but the economical aspect

(especially Singapore's investment in Malaysia and Singapore's own economy) and the geography of the region in case it opts for war. Dent (2001:1-23) stated the survival of Singapore does not solely depend on the power of its military capability but also on its economy. As a nation with limited resources, Singapore emphasizes more on its economic security that relies heavily on foreign country. Singapore would be forced to pay a high price if it opts for war because its economic prosperity depends largely from foreign countries, Malaysia in particular. If Singapore attacks or strikes Malaysia, then Singapore's economy and its investment dependence on Malaysia will surely be affected. It directly will jeopardize Singapore's security and survival. In evaluating whether Singapore can cause a threat to Malaysia, Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) stated that:-

*"Singapore is not the main threat of Malaysia's security and sovereignty. Basically, Singapore is the second-largest investor in Malaysia after United States. The total export to Malaysia is believed to be 15.8% from the whole of its total export worldwide. The total imports from Malaysia are also significant with a total of 16.8% from all its import. In other words, both countries are interdependent of each other. Hence a military conflict on Malaysia will directly affect Singapore's own survival."*

The concept of total defense that is implemented by Singapore is still insubstantial and will risk Singapore's ambition to react upon Malaysia. The concept of total defense is a doctrine of defense that stresses the use of all assets and resources of a nation to increase its ability to face any form of threats, be it domestic or international. Among the evident characteristics of total defense implementation is its activation of volunteer defense and security force in any related organization. The concept of total defense practiced by Singapore is a concept that is deemed unsuccessful because loyalty and nationalism of Singaporeans is believed to be fragile. Singaporeans that are one of the elements of total defense prioritize more on economic stability, their own possessions and life. It is different from the total defense concept of Malaysia whereby Malaysians are perceived to have high level of loyalty and nationalism (Mohd Zackry Mokhtar, 2006:38-43). Arrifin Omar (2007) stated that:-

*"As a nation controlled by Chinese, Singapore must take into account the regional countries total population surrounded by the Malay Archipelago, if Singapore plans to attack Malaysia. In this context, it is positive that Singapore should not take the risk and bear the consequences in case it attacks Malaysia which is majorly populated by Malays."*

Hence, in the context of survival of both countries during war is different. Here, Malaysia is deemed to survive when a war breaks compare to Singapore for the spirits of Singapore citizen patriotism is weak. Therefore, Singapore would not adopt a military force approach against Malaysia due to the fact that there is still weakness in its doctrine of defense that it practices. Assessing from the aspect of its military capabilities, Singapore has assets that are offensive, yet it is characterized as merely a need for a country that has insecurity issues. Although Singapore has carried out many operations, training and war strategy in the jungle (jungle warfare), yet Singapore emphasizes more on its military training performed in the city (urban warfare). This means Singapore's preparation is to defend the nation and not an attack on Malaysia which undeniably needs the jungle warfare strategy. Arrifin Omar (2007) said, if a country plans to go for war, the country must take into account the geographical aspect and its military ability and compare it to the environment of the battle field. This is because the decision to carry out war with no knowledge of the geographical condition would risk the country to face immense destruction and defeat. Although there exist several bilateral issues which rise tension between Malaysia and Singapore, the issues can be solved at a diplomatic level and not through the use of military force. The issues of water, border invasion (air and sea), islands dispute and other issues are issues that can be negotiated through diplomacy. According to Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007):-

*"What is apparent is the existence of action reaction approach which often fluctuate the relationship. Historically it is evident that both countries have shown that they are prioritizing the method of diplomacy in settling bilateral issues"*

The rapidness of Singapore's military development is not a threat to Malaysia's security. This is because the relationship of both countries' leaders is close and amicable. It must be understood that a decision to go to war or a conflict are in the hands of the leader (head of government) of a country. With the good ties among the leaders, it is the pioneer to increase confidence and trust in strengthening the relationship between Malaysia and Singapore. Both countries are manifestly serious in conducting and implementing measures in building confidence (Confident Building Measures or CBM). CBM is viewed from different perspectives. Holst and Melander (1977:147) explained the concept of CBM as such, building confidence (CBM) involves the notification of credible proof that there exist no perturbing threats. Alford (1981:134) also explained CBM as a measure that can explain military actions or objectives, while Borawski (1986:3) describes CBM as a management tool to seek a way to control and notify how, when, where and why a military activity will be executed. According to Chalmers (1996:161), in Southeast Asia, CBM has started to be recognized since December 1993 when governments in this region started to implement CBM. He explained that:-

*"It has become imperative that confidence building measures (CBM) be introduced into the region with greater vigor. CBM possess a genuine promise for reducing the chances of unintended conflict and for improving the basic quality of a region political environment. They basically aim at enhancing transparency between states....CBM also seeks to make*

*explicit military intentions in order to promote confidence by increasing the flow of information to make relations more predictable, thereby reducing the chances of conflicts and surprise attacks”.*

The move to build confidence pioneered by the top level has also been conducted at ministerial level and government official, either officially or informally. In fact Singapore's readiness in sharing intelligence information since 2001 is an act of willingness to foster good relationship both military powers. Basically Singapore's military development does not give any threat to Malaysia's safety. This is because, since Singapore separation from Malaysia in 1965, there has been no security threat on Malaysia. From Malaysia's military perspective, Singapore is a country that is not classified as a major threat. On the other hand, Indonesia and Thailand are believed to be major threats on Malaysia's security compared to Singapore. This is because according to Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007):-

*“If we assess which country has the ability to threaten Malaysia, it is not Singapore but Indonesia. This is because historically Malaysia has faced armed confrontations with Indonesia during the era of Sukarno. We should be reminded about the vision of a Greater Indonesia that was introduced by Sukarno, symbolizing that Indonesia has had the objective and agenda to conquer Malaysia”.*

The perception of this country regarding a threat is based on the history of Malaysia's confrontations with Indonesia that took place in 1963 (Patmanathan, 1980:23). The military was sent to confront Indonesian military attack that landed in Johor and was facilitated by Singapore to stop intelligence information to Indonesia in Malaysia (Aelina Surya, 1992:18). In fact, according to Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) this confrontation between Malaysia-Indonesia claimed a number of Malaysian troops in Borneo during the effort to protect national security. It is believed to be the sign and measurement of Malaysian military of Indonesia's ability to use its military force upon Malaysia (Tempur, April 2003:24). Ariffin Omar (2007) explained that:-

*“Although Singapore is strong in term of economy, political and military power, it is not a country that can easily set out a war because Singapore realizes that it is still lacking in terms of nationalism or patriotic spirit. The countries that can afford to threaten the security of Malaysia are Indonesia and Thailand.”*

Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) perceives Indonesia and Thailand as nations that are able to threaten Malaysia's security. This is because Indonesia and Thailand are regarded as unstable states base on the instability of internal politics. Internal problems such as poverty, internal rebellion, ethnic conflict, weak government and terrorist issues make Malaysia prone to security threat through the spread of these internal problems to Malaysia (Jasbir Singh, 2003:66-68). Indonesia's and Thailand's weakness and failure to prevent internal problems would provide a direct impact on Malaysia such as the excessive immigration into Malaysia, making Malaysia a hide-out and the spread of terrorist activity are all other factors that formulate the threats from Indonesia and Thailand (Allan Gyngell, 1983:116). The close ties between Malaysia and Singapore either from bilateral aspect or through international organizations, has been the pioneering of confidence and belief between both countries. The basic principle of ASEAN countries, that is not to intervene, will affect both countries to prevent from threatening each other sovereignty and security. Cooperation and agreement spirit emphasize stability of the region has become the essence of policy implementation of each country. Hence, any implementation of policy from any ASEAN member will take into account the region's interest. Five Nations Protection Law (FPDA) consisting of Malaysia, Singapore, Britain, New Zealand and Australia in 1971 has influenced understanding between countries to mutually help each another and can prevent military violence among members (Wariya, 1989:79). In conclusion Singapore's military development does not cause security threat to Malaysia. However the issue is why have several statements by leaders and scholars questioned that Singapore's military development can cause security threat to Malaysia?

#### 4.2 Security dilemma

In explaining the issue on the action of leaders and scholar that perceive Singapore's military developmental as threatening, we need to understand the concept of security. According to Snow (1998:23) the concept of security involves the freedom of mind from fear and danger pertaining two aspects: physical and psychological. In other words, security does not only exist in a physical form but also non-physical form (security dilemma). According to Nye (2005:38) and Mingst (2001:153&288), security dilemma exists when a country adopts to enhance military capability, consequently it would affect another country which will perceive the enhancement of military as a form of threat. Directly it would encourage the country to adopt the same approach because by increasing the military ability of one country it will raise insecurities to other country. If one country develops a military force it would effects directly to another country and makes it feel weak. Collin (2000:32-34) said the dilemma phenomenon of security in Southeast Asia is represented in two aspects: in the country (inter-state) and between countries (intra-state). One of the aspects that can raise security dilemma are conflict border, rapid military development in Southeast Asia such as in Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia that had a positive effect on stimulating and created the phenomenon of dilemma security among Southeast Asian countries. To ensure Malaysia's security and sovereignty, Malaysia's military power has used strategy which involves four stages namely detection, survival, strike and control. Each stage has approaches and specific measures. In explaining

the impact of dilemma security on Malaysia from Singapore's military development, Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) explained that:-

*“At this time, we (the military) have detected several signs in Singapore like its rapid military development and problems involving Malaysia-Singapore's bilateral ties. Hence, we (the military) as much as possible would strongly inclined and encourage solution through diplomacy. In efforts to face this scenario our strategy (the military) is to strengthen the relationship with Singapore so that security threat risk can be eliminated. At the same period we (the military) must continue military development planning that was planned by the government to ensure our safety. Malaysian cannot avoid security dilemma when our neighboring country Singapore is developing its military power aggressively. Yet the existing security dilemma is under control. This is because we ourselves (Malaysia's military) have our own approach in handling this phenomenon”.*

Although the above statements depicts that Malaysia is facing psychological impact (security dilemma), yet it is handled through strategy and approach whereby Malaysia's military especially has enhance confidence building measures (CBM) between Malaysia and Singapore. The military's strategy uses CBM as an approach to eliminate security dilemma and threat, through cooperation between both countries and defense force in ensuring confidence and belief between both countries that can be strengthened. It is consistent with Malaysia stance as a country that practice and emphasizes on peace and constructed relationship policy with neighboring countries, particularly Singapore. In conclusion, military development Singapore has a psychological effect (security dilemma) on Malaysia. Yet this effect was handled by Malaysia and its military through strategies and approaches that prevented this effect from affecting the relationship between both countries.

#### 4.3 Arms Race

Klare (1993:136-152) believes that there are scholars trying to prove that the arms race phenomenon in Southeast Asia has existed since 1990s and described that after the Cold War (1991), NAT countries competed to obtain modern weapons to strengthen their defense system especially in the purchase of defense and weaponry equipment. In fact he observed that this phenomenon had made Asia the region that recorded a very high arms trade and if one country's military development process is uncontrollable (abnormal), then it would spur a phenomena of arms race between countries. Buzan (2000: 88-108) believes that one country's rapid military development will invite other countries reactions to develop its military to establish the balance of power. But does this arms race phenomenon also happen in Malaysia? The development of Malaysia's military force should not be looked as a reaction (arms race) against rapid development of Singapore's military force. Malaysia's military modernization planning was drafted earlier and implemented stage by stage according to the national economic position.

In fact the rapid military development in Malaysia has been conducted since the early 1990s and it is a normal development. The purchase of several strategic equipment like battleship KD Jebat and Kasturi in 1992 which at the time was the most modern and up-to-date warship in Southeast Asia, is seen as need for Malaysia in ensuring maritime sovereignty and security. It is corresponding to the fact that Malaysia is a country whose behave maritime state. Increase in assets and the purchase of 4 more Frigate's battle ships (2006) and 2 Scorpene submarines in 2002 conducted by Malaysia is not a reaction to counter Singapore's military capability, whereby at that time Singapore owns 4 submarine and warship furnished with missiles (1 Destroyer battle ship called Formidable, 6 corvette warships Victory, 6 boat with missiles Sea Wolf, 6 Fearless warship).

Instead, the purchase of strategic defense equipment in Malaysia is seen as need of one country to make sure the level of power and capability of sea defense in Malaysia is ready to face any security threats forms outside. The purchase of two submarines which is a strategic equipment of sea defense and a process to make Malaysia have the ownership of underwater strategic weapons is to strengthen the maritime defense. According to the Director of Centepis Center UTM, Azmi Hasan (2007), the purchase of submarines is not characterized as a weaponry competition against Singapore; instead it is process in strengthening the national under water marine defense weaponry. The Air force development in Malaysia, through the purchase of 26 MIG 29 aircraft from Russia, 8 FA / 18D Hornet aircraft from US and latest 18 Sukhoi SU-30MKM aircraft said to be the most sophisticated from Russia, cannot be seen as a phenomenon of arms race with Singapore. Malaysian military development process is a step to ascertain that it is able to function as a credible army in handling any forms of threat against national sovereignty and interest. Malaysia does not wish to engage in any arm race with Singapore and at the same time also don't want to be left behind in the field of national defense. Arrifin Omar (2007) also said :-

*“In terms of sophistication Malaysia has made weaponry purchases and owns up-to-date aircraft enabling to increase Malaysia's strength. Yet in terms of quantity Singapore's has far greater ownership of aircrafts. Hence, arms race between Malaysia and Singapore is non-existent”.*

According to Gray (1983) among the features in arms race is the involvement of two or more parties behaving aggressively hostile. Parties involved will compete to match one another in term of quantity (army personnel, weapons) or

quality (military, weapons, organization, doctrine, location). Arms race phenomenon must possess a continuous increase in quantity and quality. The arms race assumption between Singapore Malaysia from the result of Singapore rapid development military is not conclusive. This is because military development process in Malaysia is based on plan and the planning is perform according to a specific time frame and also base on the countries financial capacity. What is certain is that the allocation of Malaysia's defense expenditure, since the country achieved independence in 1957, has never exceeded 5 %. This means there is no prove of Malaysia trying to match Singapore expenditure and military power. According to Acharya (2001), although there is an increase of defense expenditure allocation among Southeast Asian countries after the Cold War, it is only a record of figure increment. One country's military development is often misinterpreted by other country as a potential threat. This is influenced by psychological effect from the military development impact of the other country (Acharya,2001:136-141). Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) stated that:-

*“The development and purchase of our (Malaysian military) strategic and conventional equipment should not be considered as arms race. In fact, if we carefully analyze from our purchase of 8 FA-18 aircrafts, this lot is not qualified to be a squadron which must consist of 16 aircrafts. So where is the validity of the arms race assumption between Malaysia and Singapore? Moreover in terms of submarine purchase, it cannot be concluded as arms race because the purchase of 2 Scorpene submarines cannot match Singapore who owns 4 so far”.*

Additionally, in his opinion the purchase and development should be viewed as prevention because it is to make Singapore aware that Malaysia also has strategic equipment and Malaysia would be able to fight if war would ever erupt between both countries. Thus the military development and modernization process in Malaysia currently are process to strengthen the existing deterrence system.

#### 4.4 Deterrence system

There are raising questions concerning Malaysia's military development goals and objective that been increasingly active since the early 1990s. What are Malaysian military goals and objectives in its development and modernization process? Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007) explained that:-

*“The military will continuously be modernized through phases according to its concepts which are deterrence and forward defense. At the same time, the development towards the direction of approaches will take into account the need of all three forces army, navy and air, to ensure their abilities are more effective.”*

What is deterrence? Deterrence can be defined as a social and political contact especially to enable one party to influence the other party. It aims to ensure the enemy or opponent abides to the party who implements deterrence. Kegley and Wittkopf (1989:377) said that deterrence is a strategic capability to avoid from being attack by the enemy and it also is a move to convince the enemy not to take any action so that war can be prevented. For further explanation, please refer to the diagram 1.

The application of deterrence concept in international relations is to make sure B does not take action or implement a policy that could threaten A's position. A will threaten a severe act if B continues its plan of attack and will have to pay the consequences. Therefore A's threats are aimed to warn and prevent B's harmful purpose. This can be concluded that the deterrence concept can be a tool of diplomacy, also known as diplomatic bargaining in the international relation arena. Threat which is used by a country to its enemy is a psychological tactic without involving the use of physical force that can produce. The implementation deterrence system has directly given the enemy an opportunity to weigh and reconsider the impact of their policy or strike before taking action.

Usually a country would not execute an action that is unfavorable to itself. According to Buzan (1987:69), deterrence is a strategic capability to avoid any attack from the enemy. In other words, deterrence is a tentative to convince an enemy not to initiate a war. In explaining the goal of military development in Malaysia, it should not be considered as Malaysia's a preparation to act aggressive upon Singapore. Instead Malaysia is trying to create peace and stability with Singapore through the deterrence system. With this system it should influence both countries to weigh on decision of adopting military force against each other. Here the statements which were issued by Malaysia's leader announcing that Malaysia will respond to the attack if it was threatened are forms of deterrence approach. Both countries have already built their own deterrence system either through development of military physical approach or non physical approach. This system has successfully influenced both countries to weigh upon the impact if one launches an attack. The peace and stability between Singapore since 1965 until today are influenced by the success of the deterrence system applied by both countries. According to Ahmad Ghazali Abu Hassan (2007):-

*“If we compare military and defense capabilities of Malaysia with Singapore, Malaysia is lagging far behind. But with the strategic strength, even lacking in number, Malaysia still has succeeded in creating prevention of attack.”*

Additionally he thinks that the deterrence system is not only limited to development of a defense force branch. For example Malaysia's purchase of 2 Scorpene submarine in 2002, although it cannot match the strength of Singapore's armada equipped with 4 submarines, it does not mean that Malaysia's deterrence failed. This is because Malaysia's defense concept is not only subjected to the navy but is also a Comprehensive Defense Concept or Total Defense

(HANRUH). The concept of total defense involves all forces of security and defense, official public (volunteers force), which has given a great impact on Singapore in realize that Malaysia is strategically stronger. With the introduction and practice of joint warfare in Malaysia, this can send a message to Singapore not to belittle Malaysia's military powers. Indirectly this is another form of prevention to avoid any threats from Singapore. The military development in Malaysia has the purpose to establish a deterrence system for the enemy. It also is the aim of the government in ensuring the system and Malaysia's defense equipment is reliable and able to face enemy any threats. It does not aim to present a threat to another country, on the contrary it is the country's obligation in modernizing and upgrading the strength and military capabilities of Malaysia (Tempur, Julai 2003:2-5).

## 5. Conclusion

Singapore's rapid military development has been conducted since 1965 and has raise national security concern among Malaysian leaders. The emergence of bilateral issues such as water problem, border conflict and others have been the signs in assessing the possibility of threats that Singapore could inflict upon Malaysia. Actually these assumptions are irrelevant according to the Malaysian military's perspective, because it is just viewed as a mere development to fulfill this small country's need. The military development in Singapore doesn't intend to prepare a war on any country, but it is solely a deterrence system. The implementation deterrence system is the best asset for a country in guarantying its sovereignty and security without involving in war. Hence, offensive physical and non physical development is Singapore's approach to strengthen its deterrence system. To make sure the deterrence is strong, it has to be made aware among regional countries thus vast publicity is needed to convey the message of the deterrence system that is being implemented in Singapore.

Singapore is a small country that is very depended on service oriented economy, apart from trade and port. Singapore's shortages of natural and labor resources are elements that influence Singapore's policy to not be an initiator of triggering war. Its economic dependence with Malaysia is also another factor why Singapore would avoid not adopting military force and not affect their Malaysia-Singapore relationship. A sour relationship as a result of inflicting military force would directly destroy Singapore's economic strength. It is unarguable that the military development in Singapore will give psychology implications to Malaysia especially security dilemma. This is because according to the theory security, any increase in military development will give implications to other countries and make them feel insecure. This security dilemma does not affect Malaysia's security and sovereignty, Malaysian military has plan a strategy that is to implement the confidence building measures (CBM) concept with Singapore. This strategy not only creates good ties among head of states but also involves relationship of both countries' ministries of defense. Sharing intelligence information and cooperation among both countries relating to security aspects will eventually affect both countries confidence and belief to increase and become stronger. This progress is sure to erase the security dilemma and security threat assumptions.

The military development in Singapore has actually triggered Malaysia's awareness to address in modernizing its possession of military and defense. The purchase of military and defense equipment either strategic or conventional is Malaysia's action to ensure the system of defense and military are able to face any security and sovereignty threats. Malaysia's military development and modernization is to meet the planning and strategy which are fixed in accordance with a particular time span. In fact the purchase of defense equipment lies on the limited financial allocation. Hence, the assumption speculating an arms race by Malaysia's military from the development of Singapore's is not concluded, instead it is merely a development and modernization of both countries defense force. Basically Malaysia's military development and modernization is a process to strengthen the existing deterrence system. This is because, to ensure security and sovereignty are secured without launching a war, the implementation and enhancement of this system is the finest move. The purchase of modern equipment either conventional or strategic, is an approach that sends a warning to the enemy to consider the impact if they launch an attack on Malaysia.

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Table 1. Singapore's military Budget 1996-2006

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Amount (Billion Dolar Singapura)</b>	5.78	6.61	7.47	7.61	7.46	7.721	8.10	8.20	8.62	9.25	10.05
<b>Amount (Billion Dolar US)</b>	3.88	4.39	4.47	4.47	4.33	4.43	4.67	4.70	5.10	5.57	6.16

Source : Altered from *The Military Balance 2006*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Routledge, 2006, *The Military Balance 2003-2004*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Routledge, 2003 dan *SIPRI Yearbook 2003*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003.

Table 2. Comparison of Singapore's and Malaysia's military Budget 2004-2006

Year	2004	2005	2006
<b>Singapore's military Budget</b>	5.10 billion (USD)	5.57 billion (USD)	6.16 billion (USD)
<b>Malaysia's military Budget</b>	2.25 billion (USD)	2.47 billion (USD)	3.08 billion (USD)

Source : International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2006*, Routledge, 2006. pg 281-283

Table 3. Orders and Purchase of weapons by Singapore between 1998-2002

Supplier	No. Of weapons	Weapon	Type of Weapon	Year
France	1	La Fayette Class	Frigate	2000
	144	Aster-15 SAAM	SAM	2001
Israel	600	Python-4	BVRAAM	1997
	-	Spike-MR/LR	Anti-tank missiles	1999
USA	8	AH-64D Apache	Helikopter tempur	1999
	12	AH-64D Apache	Helikopter tempur	2001
	192	AGM-114K	Anti-tank missiles	2001
	20	AIM-120C AMRAAM	Pesawat FGA	2000
	2	S-70A/UH-60L	Helikopter	2000
	54	M-109 chassis	Senapang	2001
Sweden	4	Challenger class	Kapal selam	1995

Notes : - No available information

Source : *Altered from SIPRI Yearbook 2003, Oxford University Press, New York.*

*2003 and The Military Balance 2003-2004, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London. 2003*

Table 4. Comparison of Singapore's and Malaysia's military force base on data and weaponry Army

Army	Singapore	Malaysia
Total	50,000 personnel	80,000 personnel
Tank (MBT):	100 <i>Centurion</i> (including in Taiwan & Thailand)	MBT PT-91 ( 48 are being ordered)
Medium Tank	350 AMX-13 SM1	26 <i>Scorpion 90</i>
AIFV	294 AMX-10P 44, AMX-10 PAC 90 and IFV-25	N.A
AIFV	294 AMX-10P 44, AMX-10 PAC 90 and IFV-25	N.A
APC	1,280 ATTC <i>Bronco</i> , IFV-40/50M-113 and M-113A1	1020 APC (T) 347 <i>Adnan, Stormer, Condor, Panhard</i> and <i>Commando</i>
Artileri	286 missiles 105mm and 155mm 37LG1, 8FH- 2000, FH-88 and M-114/A1	414 (Missiles 105mm and 155mm)
Rockets	30 - 30+Gil/Spike/Milan	18 <i>ASTROS II</i>
Missiles	SAM 75 and MANPAD 75 Mistral/RBS-70/SA 18	SAM dan MANPAD 48 <i>Anza</i> , SA-18 and <i>Starburst</i>
Radar	AN/TPQ-36 Firefinder	none

#### Navy

Navy	Singapore	Malaysia
Total	4,000	15,000
Submarines	4 SSK class	2 <i>Scorpene</i> ( predicted in 2009)
Battle Ships	7 (Frigat 1 and Korvet 6) equipped with <i>Surface to Air Missile</i> (SAM), Missiles 2+140 <i>Harpoon</i> , <i>Surface to surface Missile</i> (SSM) RGM-84 C <i>Harpoon</i> and canon 76mm.	10 (Frigat 4 and Korvet 6) equipped with <i>Surface to air Missile</i> (SAM) <i>Sea Wolf</i> and <i>Aspide</i> , <i>Surface to Surface Missile</i> (SSM) MM-40 <i>Exocet</i> and <i>Otomat</i> cannon 76mm
Boats	17 equipped with <i>Surface to air Missile</i> (SAM), 2 + 140 <i>Harpoon</i> missiles, <i>Sea Wolf</i> missiles, <i>Surface to surface Missile</i> (SSM) RGM-84 C <i>Harpoon</i> , SAM <i>Mistral</i> and canons 176mm	17 equipped with SSM MM 38 <i>Exocet</i> and canon 57mm

**Air Force**

<b>Air Force</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>Malaysia</b>
Total	13,500	15,000
Combat aircraft	111 aircrafts including:F-5 (F-5S <i>Tiger II</i> and F-5T <i>Tiger II</i> ), F-16 (F-16A, F-16B, F-16C and F-16D <i>Fighting Falcon</i> ), <i>Super Skyhawk</i> 10 TA-4SU,RF-5S <i>Tiger</i> , 4E-2 <i>Hawkey</i>	64 aircrafts including:-F-5 (F-5E <i>Tiger II</i> and F-5F <i>Tiger II</i> ), MiG 29N <i>Fulcrum</i> 16 (15 aircrafts),F/A-18 D <i>Hornet</i> (8 aircrafts), <i>Hawk</i> MK108,SU-30MKM (ordering18 aircrafts )
Ballistic Missile	<i>Air to Surface Missile (ASM)AGM Shrike, Maverick, Harpoon</i> and <i>AM Exocet, Air to Air Missile (AAM) AIM Sparrow</i> and <i>Sidewinder</i>	<i>Air to Surface Missile (ASM) AGM 65-Shrike</i> and <i>Harpoon, Air to Air Missile (AAM) AIM Sparrow</i> and <i>Sidewinder</i>
Combat Helicopter	8 AH-64D <i>Apache</i>	none
Helicopter	40 <i>Super Puma</i> , <i>Super D Chinook</i> and <i>Cougar</i>	22 <i>Nuri, Black Hawk</i> and <i>Alouette</i>
UAV aircraft	64 <i>Blue Horizon</i> , <i>Chukar III, Searcher MKII</i>	3 <i>Eagle 150</i>

Source: *The Military Balance 2006*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Routledge, 2006.

**Deterrence Concept**

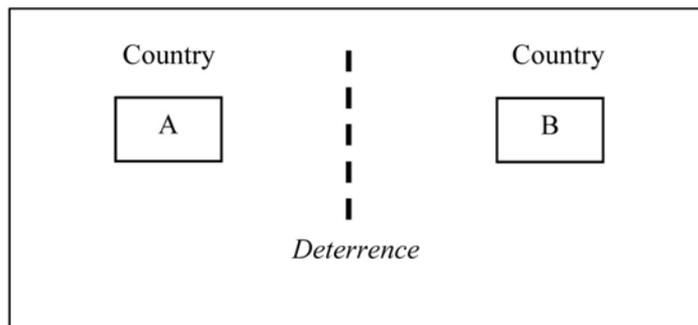


Figure 1. Deterrence Concept

Source: Mohamad Faisol Keling, Mohd Dino Khairi Sharriffuddin and Laila

Suriya Ahmad Apandi (2006).*Theory and Concept of International Relationship and strategic studies*. Sintok:UUM Publishing