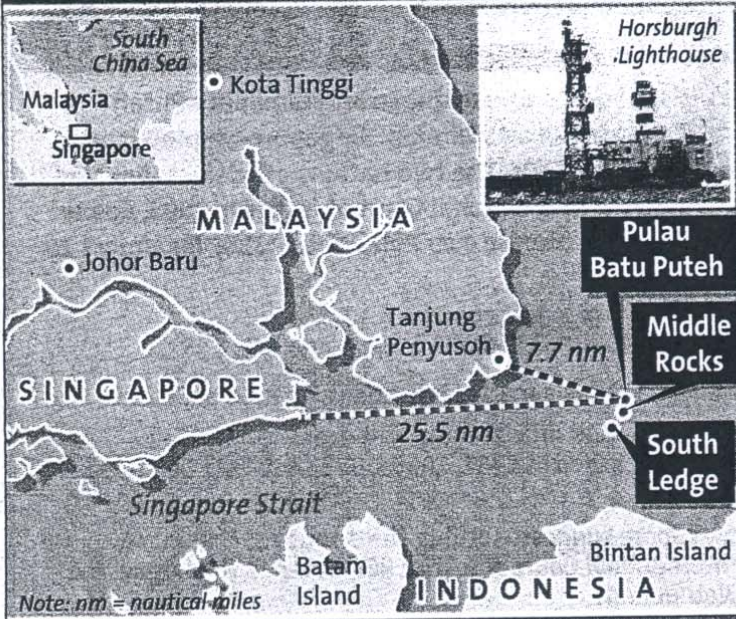


Decision resolves 28-year-old dispute

Row over Middle Rocks and South Ledge started in 1993

PULAU BATU PUTEH/PEDRA BRANCA (Portuguese for white rock)



FACTS

- **Where:** 7.7 nautical miles from Malaysia (east of Johor) and 25.5 nautical miles from Singapore. Near Middle Rocks and South Ledge.
- **Size:** 8,560 square metres at low tide.
- **Length:** A maximum 137m.
- **Name:** Called white rock because of the bird droppings that hardened on the rocks over centuries.
- **Houses:** Horsburgh Lighthouse built in 1851.

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PETALING JAYA: The 28-year dispute over the ownership of Pulau Batu Puteh is over with the International Court of Justice awarding it to Singapore.

However, the court in The Hague awarded Malaysia the ownership of Middle Rocks, a group of rocks located 0.6 nautical miles (1.1km) south of Pulau Batu Puteh, or Pedra Branca as it is known in Singapore.

The ICJ did not determine the ownership of South Ledge, a smaller group of rocks 2.1 nautical miles (3.8km) south of Pulau Batu Puteh, stating that its sovereignty would depend on whose territorial waters it was located in.

Case acting president and ICJ vice-president Judge Awn Shawkat Al-Khasawneh delivered the decision, which is binding and not subject to appeal.

The 300-page judgment took about two hours to be read. The judgment was telecast live by RTM1.

Twelve of the courts' 16 judges ruled in favour of Singapore on the question of the sovereignty of Pulau Batu Puteh.

As for Middle Rocks, only Singapore's appointed ad-hoc judge Pemmaraju Sree-

nivasa Rao of India dissented from the other judges' decision in favour of Malaysia.

Awn Shawkat, however, said South Ledge was not a clear-cut case as the low-tide elevation falls within the overlapping territorial waters by Pulau Batu Puteh and Middle Rocks and there was no previous mandate for Malaysia or Singapore to draw their delimitation line.

The court held that the dispute over the island crystallised on Feb 14, 1980 when Singapore lodged an official protest over a 1979 Malaysian map which showed the island as under Malaysian territorial waters.

The dispute over Middle Rocks and South Ledge only started in 1993, the court ruled as it was Singapore's first mention of it in its claim to Pulau Batu Puteh.

Pulau Batu Puteh, which is 7.7 nautical miles from Malaysia and 25.5 nautical miles from Singapore, has a maximum length of 137m.

It is also the site of the Singapore-operated Horsburgh Lighthouse, which was built in 1851 and marks the eastern entrance to the Straits of Singapore.

PERPUSTAKAAN PETA NEGARA

THE STAR
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 N 6
 DECISION RESOLVES 28 YEAR OLD DISPUTE

Nama Akhbar
 Tarikh
 Muka Surat
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28 YEAR OLD DISPUTE