

# PM: Sabah Government will fight Amirkahar's suit

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. -- The Barisan Nasional Government in Sabah will contest the suit filed by an opposition Assemblyman challenging the validity of the appointment of the State Cabinet, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the State Government would file its defence through the State Attorney-General to the suit filed by the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) Assemblyman for Banggi, Datuk Amirkahar Tun Mustapha, last Friday.

While the defence is being prepared, the State Cabinet will continue to function as usual, Dr Mahathir told reporters at the Kuala Lumpur International airport in Subang after welcoming back the badminton squad which took part in the Thomas Cup tournament.

"It is not that we want to play politics...it will be left to the laws (for a decision on

the matter). We will abide by the (decision of the) laws," he said when asked to comment on the suit.

Amirkahar had also sought an injunction to restrain the State Ministers from exercising their powers and duties as assigned to them in their respective portfolios pending the disposal of the court case.

The Ministers are Datuk Yong Teck Lee (Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Local Government and Housing), Datuk Mohamed Salleh Tun Said (Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Finance), Datuk Lajim Okin (Agriculture and Fisheries), Abdul Chapur Salleh (Communication and Works), Thau Yip Shen (Tourism and Environmental Development), Pandikar Amin Mulia (Culture, Youth and Sports) and Kong Hong Ming (Social Services).

Amirkahar has named the Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun

Mohamad Said Keruak and Chief Minister Tan Sri Sakaran Dandai as the first and second defendants respectively. Yong, Salleh, Lajim, Ghapur, Thau, Pandikar and Kong have been named the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth defendants respectively.

Dr Mahathir said Amirkahar had, by filing the suit, given importance only to his interests and political future.

"Amirkahar does not care if Sabah collapses. He only thinks of himself," he said.

On the BN's preparations for the next general election, Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, said the BN election machinery was ready.

On the allocation of seats for the BN component parties for the general election, he said the matter had yet to be decided on but added "it will not be a problem".