

# Judge has tarnished image of court, says Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR: High Court Judge Datuk Muhammad Kamil Awang has tarnished the image of the court by dragging it into public controversy, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said it was not easy to verify whether the judge was told to dismiss

the case or not (involving election petitions on the result of the Likas state seat in the 1999 Sabah state elections).

"I'm not sure because it is a telephone conversation," he told reporters here yesterday.

"Now we have problem trusting the court as he has tarnished the image of the

court," Dr Mahathir said.

In his written judgment, declaring the election of Barisan Nasional candidate Datuk Yong Teck Lee as null and void, Muhammad Kamil had stated that his superior had given him a directive over the phone to strike off the two election petitions without

hearing.

Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed that for the first time, a judge had included his personal frustrations in his judgment.

"It is unprecedented for the judge to say in his judgment that his child did not get good treatment from the govern-

ment."

He said the judge should have immediately reported the matter but he did not do so because he was afraid of his own fault.

"There is also the Government he can report to or he could have reported to me," he said.