

PM: We will defend our rights legally

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PUTRAJAYA: Mobilising security assets to protect Malaysia's interests overseas may not be feasible but the government will defend the country's rights against claims made by the self-proclaimed heirs of the Sulu sultanate in the court of law, says Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The Prime Minister said since the matter had been brought to court, Malaysia would defend its position through the law.

"We need not mobilise (security assets). Furthermore, it will not be easy as countries where the assets are located will not allow this. So, we will defend and protect our rights through legal means.

"I give you my assurance and guarantee that we will not compromise nor budge an inch when it comes to protecting the rights, interests and sovereignty of the country," he told reporters after launching the National

Security Conference here yesterday.

The Prime Minister was asked whether there was a need to mobilise security assets to protect Malaysia's interests overseas.

Ismail Sabri also said that Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Parliament) Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar and PETRONAS will be having a session soon with lawmakers to explain the situation.

The *Financial Times* recently reported that the so-called Sulu heirs had invoked the Paris arbitration court decision to award RM63bil to them.

The eight Sulu heirs based in the Philippines were represented by London-based lawyers led by Elisabeth Mason.

According to the *Financial Times*, quoting lawyers for the group, bailiffs in Luxembourg seized the Luxembourg-registered subsidiaries PETRONAS Azerbaijan (Shah Deniz) and PETRONAS South Caucasus on behalf of their clients on July 11.

On July 13, Wan Junaidi said Malaysia had obtained a stay order on the RM63bil award.

The Paris Court of Appeal had allowed an application by the Malaysian government to suspend enforcing the final award dated Feb 28 following claims by parties who alleged that they were heirs and successors in interest to Sultan Jamalul Kiram II through an international arbitration proceeding in Madrid.

With the stay order, the final award, which had been obtained by Spanish arbitrator Dr Gonzalo Stampa earlier, could not be enforced in any country pending a decision by the French court on the finality of the matter.

A special team led by Wan Junaidi has been formed to draft action plans to deal with the issue.

Watch the video
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