

'Dr M should have raised objections against Apandi earlier'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Any objection to Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali chairing the task force reviewing the legal issues surrounding the sovereignty over Pulau Batu Puteh (Pedra Branca), Middle Rocks and South Ledge should have been raised earlier.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Parliament and Law) Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said there were no issues regarding the cabinet's decision on Oct 29, 2021, to appoint Apandi as chairman of the task force.

He was responding to former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's decision not to continue with the witness interviews with the task force's sub-committee on tort of misfeasance at the Attorney-General's Chambers here on Tuesday.

Dr Mahathir came for the interview, but left when he found out that Apandi was still its chairman.

"The task force only wanted to get his opinion on the 2018 situation when the government decided to withdraw the application to review the case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Tun (Dr Mahathir Mohamad) was well aware of the appointment of the task force chairman and he could have turned down the invitation to attend the session at the A-GC," Wan Junaidi said in a statement here.

He said the task force was formed to review Malaysia's legal options, as well as investigate the withdrawal of the review application at the ICJ in 2018.

"The task force has been carrying out its duties for seven months and will continue until the completion of the interim and final reports. It is also preparing follow-up action." **Bernama**