

'Dr M should not drag cabinet members into issue'

PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail has taken a swipe at Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, criticising his attempts to involve other cabinet ministers in the Batu Puteh issue.

“His attempt to drag others into this issue is like a drowning person grasping at a piece of driftwood,” he said.

Saifuddin, who is the current home minister, added that Dr Mahathir should instead refer to the sequence of events detailed in the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) report, which revealed that the then prime minister had issued a letter before a

cabinet meeting had taken place.

He also clarified that while he was the then domestic trade and consumer affairs minister in 2018, he was only appointed after a decision on the matter was made.

“By the time I was appointed, the matter had already been decided, everything had been done.

“Let’s refer to the sequence of events as outlined in the RCI re-



Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail

port, which states that even before a cabinet meeting was held, a letter had already been issued by Dr Mahathir,” he said.

Last Thursday, the RCI tasked with reviewing the handling of the Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge sovereignty case recommended that a criminal investigation be initiated against Dr Mahathir.

The RCI said Dr Mahathir withdrew the application to the In-

ternation Court of Justice (ICJ) for an interpretation of its ruling without consulting the cabinet in 2018.

On Tuesday, the two-time former prime minister once again denied that the move to withdraw Malaysia’s application to review the ICJ’s ruling on Batu Puteh was a unilateral decision.

Maintaining that it was a collective decision, he said his cabinet members in the then-Pakatan Harapan administration were present when the review was tabled for discussion, but none of them commented on or objected to the move.