

JUDICIAL REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Dr M's Batu Puteh RCI court decision tomorrow

KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will know tomorrow about his judicial review applications over the Royal Commission of Inquiry's (RCI) proceedings into Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge.

High Court judge Datuk Amarjit Singh fixed the date after hearing submissions from Dr Mahathir's counsel, Zainur Zakaria, and senior federal counsel Shamsul Bolhassan, who appeared for the government, yesterday.

The judge said he would deliver his verdict at 8.30am as Dr Mahathir was expected to take the stand before the seven-member panel about 9.30am.

The former prime minister is seeking the recusal of (RCI chairman) Tun Md Raus Sharif, (RCI commissioners) Datuk Dr Baljit Singh Sidhu and Datuk Mohammed Ridha Abdul Kadir due to alleged conflict of interest.

He also wanted the proceedings to be open to the public and to bring along his lawyers when testifying in the proceedings.

In his supporting affidavit, Dr Mahathir said the RCI's decision to not open the proceedings to the public was unreasonable.

Dr Mahathir is seeking a dec-

laration that he is an individual involved in or related to the matter being investigated by the RCI under Section 18 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950 (Act 119).

On Feb 14, His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia, gave his consent to the establishment of an RCI into the issue.

In 2022, then prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said there was possible negligence and oversight on Dr Mahathir's part over the Batu Puteh claim.

Ismail Sabri had said the cabinet was told by the special task force for the case that Dr Mahathir might have erred in withdrawing an application to review the International Court of Justice's award of Batu Puteh's sovereignty to Singapore.

Dr Mahathir subsequently said the withdrawal of the appeal was based on former attorney-general Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali's officers' advice.

In 2008, the ICJ ruled that Batu Puteh belonged to Singapore, Middle Rocks' to Malaysia, and South Ledge to the state in the territorial waters in which it is located.