

ASTAKA set to have its own training, competition centre

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KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah Sepaktakraw Association's (ASTAKA) dream to have its own building for training and competition may soon become a reality.

Its president Datuk Haji Awang Sham Amit said they are currently collaborating with University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) in realising their goal.

In fact, he revealed that, in principle, they have an agreement between them and UMS relating to the matter.

"The place has already been identified, which is at the UMS Sports Complex tennis court area. We just need to make some improvements such as roofing, lighting and so on," said Awang.

He said these when met after he officiated at the Sabah

Youth Sepaktakraw Championship (Under-21) that is ongoing at the Luyang Community Hall, near here yesterday.

"We are still in talks with UMS about this matter, but basically, there has been an agreement between both parties. I hope, everything will be settled within this year," he added.

Awang Sham said that by having its own training centre, it will ease their burden a little in developing the sport in the state.

"When we have our own building, we won't have to find and rent a venue for centralised training or competition. You see, organising a competition such as this involves a large sum of money, and it is an extra burden for the association," he said.

On the championship,

Awang Sham said they hope to unearth new talents from the three-day championship.

"The main objective of the tournament is to hunt for new talent, apart from giving our youngsters the opportunity to showcase their skills in the game," said Awang, while stressing on the importance of discipline among the players.

He also thanked all, who have contributed towards the staging of the event, while hoping that next time around, more generous individuals, corporate bodies or companies will come forward and give them a helping hand, especially financially, as they bid to bring the sport to greater heights.

A total of 16 boy and five girl teams are battling it out for top honours in the championship, which has been on-



THREE-DAY CHAMPIONSHIP ... Awang (5th from right), handing over a memento to state Sukma team coach Daud Amba.

going since Friday.

The state Sukma team are seen as the red-hot favourites for the title in the boys' cat-

egory while in the girls' event, it is anyone's guess.

The state Sukma girls' team are not competing as they are

currently undergoing training in Thailand, preparing for the country's biggest sporting carnival.