



Awang Sham (second right) presents a memento to a sepaktakraw team during a the meet-the-players session. Also seen is Karim (right).

Astaka, UMS working together on sepaktakraw venue, training centre

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KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah Sepaktakraw Association (Astaka) are working with Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) on a plan to have their own building and training centre for the sport.

Astaka president Datuk Awang Sham Amit said, in principle, both parties have agreed to the matter.

“The space has already been identified and it will be at the tennis courts. We only need to make improvements such as roofing and lighting fixtures to turn it into a takraw training centre and competition venue.

“The matter is still being discussed but, in principle, both parties are already in agreement. I hope all the necessary matters can be finalised by this year,” said Awang Sham when met by reporters at the Sabah Sepaktakraw Junior Championship opening ceremony at the Luyang

Multi-purpose Hall here yesterday.

Awang Sham stressed that having their own building would make it easier for Astaka to implement the development of sepaktakraw with more efficiency.

“If there is already a building, there is no need to find and rent a venue for a central training or to organise a championship like today, which involves a huge cost.

“Therefore, I hope the cooperation with UMS will be realised as soon as possible,” he said.

On the tournament, Awang Sham said it was a suitable platform to help Astaka monitor the development of existing players and sharpen their talent.

“It is also a good warm-up for the state squads who will be bringing Sabah’s challenge to the Perak 19th Sukma (Malaysia Games) 2018 this

September.

“Our squad was given a big task by the state government, who wants the women’s team to retain their three gold medals won at the Sarawak 18th Sukma 2016 and one gold from the men. We will try our best to keep them,” said Awang Sham, who is also Vice President 2 of the Malaysia Sepaktakraw Association (PSM).

Meanwhile, organising chairman Karim Rahim, who is also Astaka deputy president, said the youth championship would be one of the key agendas in the annual activity calendar of the association.

“The championship has been planned for a long time and I am happy that it has finally come true,” he said.

A total of 16 boys’ teams and five girls’ teams are taking part in the tournament.