

'Dr M, ministers didn't complain about cheating'

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by Kow Gah Chie

Police did not receive any report from former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad or other cabinet ministers that they had been cheated in relation to the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) land deal.

Police investigation officer R Rajagopal told the Kuala Lumpur High Court today that there had been no such complaint from 1999 to 2002.

Rajagopal also confirmed that police never received any report lodged against Ling, and no police personnel had lodged a report that the cabinet had been cheated.

Cross-examined by defence counsel Wong Kian Kheong (right) , he said police had recorded a statement from Mahathir on Aug 15 this year, and from another ex-premier, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, on March 3 last year.

However, he did not reveal what they had said.

Rajagopal was the final prosecution witness in the trial of former transport minister and ex-MCA head Dr Ling Liong Sik.

Rajagopal, 48, is the head of the miscellaneous commercial crime unit, Bukit Aman Commercial Crime Department. He is also the investigation officer in former transport minister Chan Kong Choy's cheating case.

Chan's cheating trial will start in April, in which Abdullah will be called as the first witness.

Rajagopal said police had taken statements from Ling twice, on Oct 2, 2009, and on April 1, 2010.

Ling, 68 (left) , is charged with cheating the government by not disclosing to the cabinet an additional interest rate of 7.5 percent per annum on the purchase price of the land for the PKFZ project.

The price had been fixed at RM1,088,456,000 by the Valuation and Property Services Department, based on RM25 per sq ft, inclusive of the coupon/interest rate.

Ling faces two alternative charges, of allegedly cheating and intentionally omitting from telling the cabinet that the 7.5 percent per annum was an additional interest rate on the land price.

The offences were allegedly committed at the fourth floor of the Prime Minister's Office in the Perdana Putra building in Putrajaya, between Sept 25 and Nov 6, 2002.

Ling trial may be wrapped up tomorrow

Earlier, Rajagopal explained that the reason it took three months to declassify cabinet documents was because this involved security and sensitivity.

Wong also complained that the defence was not provided with the documents, especially the full copy of the minutes of the cabinet meetings, audio records of the cabinet meetings, and the Port Klang Authority's annual report and financial statement for the 2003 financial year.

He argued that the documents would reflect exactly the acquisition cost of the PKFZ land.

The defence counsel warned that not providing documents needed by the defence was an offence under the Criminal Procedure Code.

However, Rajagopal, when re-examined by deputy public prosecutor Manoj Kurup, said the audio recordings had been destroyed after the minutes of the previous meeting had been endorsed.

The PKA's financial documents were furnished to the defence in the evening.

The trial is expected to be wrapped up tomorrow, after 30 days of hearing, during which 25 witnesses were called.

The court sits tomorrow for both parties to go through the witness list and documents, after which the date for submissions will be fixed.