

Settlers' plea: Get Isa Samad off Felda co-op
MalaysiaKini.com
January 5, 2012
Hafiz Yatim

Fresh from notifying the federal cooperatives authority Suruhanjaya Koperasi Malaysia (SKM) that former Negri Sembilan menteri besar Isa Samad cannot be Koperasi Permodalan Felda Bhd (KPF) chairperson, several Felda settlers are now taking the matter to court.

Children of the Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) settlers, who have teamed up as a non-governmental organisation called Anak, and KPF members will file a judicial review within this month to challenge Isa's appointment.

"Isa cannot be KPF chairperson as he is not a Koperasi Permodalan Felda member," Anak president Mazlan Aliman told Malaysiakini.

NONE "So how can someone outside KPF now head it?"

"We have filed complaints with SKM on this and we have also written to the International Cooperatives Alliance to protest Isa's appointment," Mazlan (right) said.

It has been reported that a Felda subsidiary, Felda Global Ventures Sdn Bhd, is to be listed on Bursa Malaysia, with KPF being used as the means for this.

KPF is one of the richest cooperatives in Malaysia, outperforming even government-owned Bank Rakyat.

The planned listing is seen as a bid to undermine the rights of the settlers and open the ownership of their land to investors, including foreigners, once Felda Global Ventures is listed.

This, Mazlan said, would further undermine the original intention of setting up Felda, which is to help poor rural Malays.

Anak is one of the NGOs in the Save Felda movement, which wants to prevent the listing exercise on grounds it will not benefit the settlers and will instead bring into question the settlers' ownership of the land.

On Dec 29, the NGO group convinced former finance minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, said to be one of the pioneer founders of Felda during the tenure of former prime minister Abdul Razak Hussein, to be part of the movement.

KPF postpones meeting

In a related development, KPF postponed a meeting with its members it had scheduled for today to pave the way for the listing of Felda Global Ventures.

NONE In the High Court in Kuantan, which was due yesterday to hear the application by four settlers challenging the holding of the extraordinary general meeting, the application was struck out after the court was notified of the EGM postponement.

According the settlers' lawyer Mohd Haris Mohan Abdullah, the application was filed on Dec 23 and they only obtained the court documents on Dec 28.

"However, on Dec 30, KPF decided to postpone the EGM scheduled for Jan 5. This resulted in our application seeking the injunction becoming academic," Haris told Malaysiakini.

Following this, Haris said, Kuantan High Court judge Mariana Yahya struck out the application, with the liberty to file afresh if the EGM was fixed for another date.

Felda Global Ventures and KPF, which were represented by Mohd Hafarizam Harun, also confirmed that the High Court in Kuantan yesterday struck off the injunction filed by the settlers.

It is not known when KPF plans to hold its EGM, but Mazlan said they were prepared to face any eventuality, including filing the judicial review of Isa's legitimacy as KPF chairperson.

He reiterated their call for the removal of Isa as Felda chairperson and Sabri Ahmad as chief executive officer of Felda Global Ventures, saying their appointments within less than a year have "caused a turmoil" in the assets of Felda.

He said after Raja Muhammad Alias, who served as chairperson from 1979, left Felda in 2001, it had RM5 billion in reserves, "but sadly today, we do not know how much remains".

It was also reported recently that Felda has taken a RM6 billion loan from the Employees Provident Fund.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/185720>