

BN excos refused to assist in Tan 'land scam' probe
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The previous Penang Barisan Nasional executive councillors had failed to cooperate in the investigation of an alleged land scam which eventually cost millions of ringgit.

NONE Deputy Chief Minister P Ramasamy (right) said the BN had blown two golden opportunities to redeem themselves over the infamous Tan Hak Ju “scam” which has cost Penangites RM14.7 million.

Tan sued the state government in 2005 for withdrawing his application for a plot of land in Seberang Perai for quarrying as the area was already owned by two associations.

Except for Teluk Bahang assemblyperson Hilmi Yahya, the other state excos “refused” to attend the probe, initiated by the Pakatan Rakyat government in 2008, he added.

NONE Hilmi (left) was then Penang deputy chief minister, under the Gerakan-led BN state government.

“We did not invite them to attend the probe to investigate them. We asked them to come so we could seek their help in finding out what went wrong,” he told reporters at a press conference today.

“They refused to come because they said we were playing politics,” he added. Ramasamy was accompanied by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng at the media session in Komtar.

Ramasamy, who presented a White Paper in the state legislative assembly in April last year, said the state government had nothing to apologise over the case as the BN administration then was responsible for it.

He added that the other way BN could have redeemed itself from the “scandal” was to compensate the businessman with RM1.8 million, as demanded earlier instead of allowing him to initiate a legal claim for RM40 million.

Former state exco and BN working committee chief Dr Teng Hock Nan has refused to accept the case being labelled a scandal, insisting that the Pakatan government apologise and retract their statement.

NONE On the RM1.8 million compensation, Teng (right) said the state was waiting for proper documentation from Tan before they could proceed with the payment, but none were provided.

Meanwhile, Lim questioned why the previous BN administration did not take any action against the officer involved in the case during its term prior to 2008.

“He was only given a warning. Action was only taken when we took over the government. We had him transferred to another division.

“We cannot take action twice on a person, that’s double jeopardy. We can’t touch him now, thanks to BN,” he muttered.

Lim, also the DAP secretary-general, said Tan was appealing the Court of Appeal’s decision to compensate him with RM500,000.

The court had ordered him to return the RM14.7 million awarded to him earlier but it is unlikely that he would pay back the amount, added Lim.

“So if we lose the case, will BN and Teng pay the RM40 million to Tan? If we win the case, will BN and Teng, pay us back the RM14.7 million?” he queried.

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