

Hak Ju land case: Teng hits back at Guan Eng
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Penang Barisan Nasional working committee chief Dr Teng Hock Nan is not amused that Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has asked him to pay back the money compensated to a businessman over a land deal which went sour prior to 2008.

"I don't know what is the logic for him to ask the previous (BN) government or individuals like me to pay, what sort of CM and government is this?" he retorted.

As ruled by the Penang High Court, the state government had paid businessman Tan Hak Ju RM14.7 million in 2008 for withdrawing his application for a plot of land in Seberang Perai for quarrying.

The land actually belonged to two local associations since 1969.

Tan sued the state government for RM40 million but the Court of Appeal in Putrajaya recently ruled that he should only be compensated with RM500,000.

gerakan teng hock nan Penang AGMSince then, Teng (right) had been urging Lim to apologise for constantly attacking him and accusing him of being involved in the alleged land scam since the incident happened when the former was a state executive councillor.

But Lim asked if Teng would like to return the RM14.7 million already paid to Tan, saying he was uncertain if the state could recover this money despite the Court of Appeal judgment.

Between a mistake and a scam

Teng, who is state Gerakan chief, continues to insist that the previous BN administration was not involved in the alleged land scam.

pakatan pokok sena ceramah 140112 lim guan engHe urged Lim (left) to look at the dictionary and find out the meaning of "scam", accusing the latter of not being able to differentiate between a mistake and a scam.

However, he admitted that the land deal was a mistake committed by one of the officers, adding that the BN had never denied making the mistake.

"This was not a scam and mistakes can happen in any administration," he stressed.

Teng said the mistake in the land application had already been ratified, and the plot was returned to the two Hokkien associations, who actually owned it.

"But Tan decided to bring the case to court, what can we do?" he asked.

Meanwhile, Teng said Lim should refrain from practising double standards.

Suing is not Penang culture

When the High Court ruled that the state compensate Tan with RM14.7 million, Lim made it sound as if the state government had already lost the money, Teng added.

But when the Court of Appeal ruled that only RM500,000 should be paid to Tan, Lim said the amount was

not finalised, Teng stressed.

When asked if he would initiate legal action against Lim for continuing to hound him about the case, Teng said he would reserve the right to sue the chief minister.

“The issue about suing does not arise unless I am really forced to do so, otherwise suing is not a political culture in Penang,” he said, much to the amusement of reporters.

“But I don’t know what it is like for those from Malacca, I just want to remind him not to be too arrogant,” quipped Teng.

On the RM14 million already deposited into Tan’s bank account by the High Court, Teng asked if the state had ever contested the amount.

“Have they used all legal efforts to contest the amount before the court made the decision? This is their responsibility,” he added.

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