

NGO: Loss of Bayan Mutiara mosque land Umno's fault
MalaysiaKini.com
April 01, 2012
By Susan Loone

The Penang Malay Congress has thrown the ball into Umno's court by saying the party was responsible for ensuring that the mosque land in Bayan Mutiara was not sold to a private developer.

Its president Rahmad Isahak said Umno, which was part of the previous administration under BN, should have ensured that the land was subdivided after the project phase I layout plan was approved by the local council (MPPP) in 2006.

"One year and five months passed before Pakatan took over the state in 2008. It shows there was no urgency to gazette this land for a mosque because Umno thought that BN would rule again," he stressed.

Rahmad said the MPPP approved plan had now expired but questioned what Umno had done to ensure that the land for meant for a mosque was subdivided for ownership by the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP).

Legally, if the land was not subdivided, the state land office would not be able to issue a qualified title or transfer land ownership to MAIPP, he added.

"What has Umno been doing from 2006 to 2008, before the state was taken over by Pakatan Rakyat?" Rahmad asked.

"Where is the legal proof that the land has been gazetted and owned by MAIPP as claimed by Umno?" queried the former court staff.

Umno's two week challenge

Rahmad was referring to Penang Umno Youth insistence that Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, via state agency - Penang Development Corporation - had sold a plot of mosque land in Bayan Mutiara to Ivory Properties Group Berhad (IPGB).

Lim is suing the wing's chief Shaik Hussein Mydin and Umno-owned Malay daily Utusan Malaysia for accusing him of disposing land meant for a mosque and angering Muslim sensitivities. NONE

Yesterday, Penang Umno chief Zainal Abidin Osman (left) issued Lim a challenge to reply within two weeks on the sale of the mosque and school sites in Bayan Mutiara.

He said Penang Umno would consider applying for a court injunction or any other steps to prevent the development of the land if Lim failed to give a concrete reply within the period.

Lim, in a statement on Thursday, had already said the 41.6 hectare of land was sold by open tender, that there was no sub-division of title but the entire piece had been sold.

He added that there are standard requirements for schools and places of worship like surau or mosques that are compulsory by local government and must be included in any development project.

In a statement yesterday, IPGB deputy chairperson and executive director Nazir Ariff said the company will comply with the necessary requirements in accordance to the guidelines of MPPP.

"Community facilities for public purposes such as legal access, bicycle tracks, infrastructures, low and medium cost housing, schools, mosque and place of religious worship for non-Muslims will be

provided accordingly should the need arises," he added.

Silence of two Muslim state exco

Rahmad also expressed disappointed that the two Penang Malay state exco - Deputy Chief Minister I Mansor Othman and Batu Maung assemblyperson Abdul Malik Abul Kassim - were silent on this matter.

"Their opinions and actions are necessary and compulsory. Their silence only means that they agree to all that is happening," said Rahmad.

"Do not let the Malays to be in such a dilemma. If they wish to be mute in Islamic affairs concerning the state, it is better for them to let go their positions," he added.

"Malays do not need this kind of leaders," he stressed.

Penang Umno lauds assurance

Meanwhile Bernama reports that Penang Umno today lauded the assurance given by Ivory Properties Group Berhad (IPGB) that public facilities like a mosque, a school and other houses of worship would be built on the super prime land, Bayan Mutiara, Bayan Baru.

Datuk Zainal Abidin Osman, penang umno chiefPenang Umno Liaison Committee chairman Zainal Abidin Osman (left) said the assurance proved that Umno had succeeded in its mission to get public facilities, especially a mosque and a school, built on the land as planned by the Penang Municipal Council (MPPP).

"However, we want Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng to also give his assurance that the mosque and school will be built on the site as in the initially proposed plan," he said.

Zainal Abidin spoke to reporters when asked to comment on recent remarks by IPGB executive director Nazir Ariff that the public facilities would also be built on the super prime land.

Nazir was also reported as saying that IPGB would adhere to all the regulations pertaining to the development as stipulated by the MPPP.

Last week, Penang Umno Youth said the sites proposed for the mosque, school, police station, hawker complex and community centre, which were approved by the MPPP in 2006, had been sold by the state government to a private developer, IPGB.

The sites are part of the 41.5-hectare of super prime land in Bayan Mutiara which was sold for RM1.07 billion to be developed into Penang World City with an investment value of RM10 billion.

