

**Gov't's LRT broken promise a letdown for TI-M**  
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**By Koh Jun Lin**

Transparency International's Malaysia chapter (TI-M) is disappointed that the Integrity Pact played no role in the Ampang Line LRT extension project tender exercise.

In addition, TI-M president Paul Low Seng Kuan said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's alleged interference in selecting the successful bidder would undermine bidders' confidence in future projects.

"This is because people who (participate) in the tender may not be competing on a level playing field and their effort of submitting tenders may not be evaluated in a truly professional and objective manner," he told Malaysiakini when contacted yesterday.

He added that the research and manpower involved in submitting a bid may come to around RM 500,000.

NONEShowing the purported minutes of the Finance Ministry's Procurement Committee(JPMK), PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli meeting had claimed on Wednesday that the committee had originally selected Balfour Beatty-Invensys Consortium for the RM1 billion project.

However, the contract was eventually awarded to a consortium led by George Kent Bhd, whose bid was apparently higher than the others.

However, the company has no experience in rail projects, Rafizi blamed this on Najib's interference.

Paul Low said the government needs to be consistent with its calls for transparency and open tender.

He said it needs to clarify the issue and explain to taxpayers, "why the government needs to pay a higher price for an award that is given to a less-qualified company... to prevent public suspicion and the public has the right to know."

Low also said that although the government had said it would use Integrity Pacts advocated by TI-M in its tenders, this was absent in the Ampang Line LRT extension project.

An integrity pact is a legally-binding agreement, including a commitment not to solicit or pay bribes.

"If they had used the Integrity Pact, it would have provided some safeguards," he said.