

## **PM and his election integrity pledge**

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**Lim Kit Siang**

MP SPEAKS On Feb 20, almost a month ago, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak signed Transparency International Malaysia's Election Integrity Pledge with much aplomb in the presence of many BN leaders including Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud.

Yesterday, international NGO Global Witness released a shocking video involving a nexus of prominent figures all of whom connected to Taib. They include Norlia and Fatima, Taib's cousins and the daughters of former Sarawak chief minister Abdul Rahman Ya'akub.

Fatima was caught on camera admitting that she could "speak to the CM very easily" in order to obtain the necessary approvals for a land sale to a Global Witness investigator - land, which Fatima said, was given to them by Taib.

This land sale would involve a company, Ample Agro Sdn Bhd, whose first six shareholders are all Abdul Rahman's daughters. Among them are Tanjong Manis MP Nora as well as Najib's sister-in-law Khadijah.

Norlia is also caught on tape asking the potential 'buyer' from Global Witness to undergo an illegal transaction whereby only 10 percent of the sale price of the land would be booked in Malaysia while the rest would be booked in Singapore in order to avoid Reals Property Gains Tax (RPGT).

Norlia also said that these sorts of deals "have been done before" in order to assure the buyer that this is a standard operating procedure.

Ample Agro's lawyer, Alvin Chong, also confirmed the nature of this transaction in the video, proposing ways for the potential buyer to evade the 49 percent foreign shareholding limitation by appointing nominees based in Singapore.

Alvin is heard saying: "I've put this to use many a time."

Another individual implicated is Huang Lung Ong, the nephew of Sarawak timber tycoon Hii Yi Peng. Ong implied that his uncle and majority owner of Billion Venture, would pay a percentage of the sale price - "probably 10 percent" - to Taib in order to show his "gratitude".

What Najib must do

With the release of this video, I call upon Najib to:

1. Instruct the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to conduct an immediate investigation into the individuals who appeared in the Global Witness video including Norlia, Fatima, Chong and Hii.

2. Instruct the Inland Revenue Board to conduct an immediate investigation into previous deals carried out by companies owned by Norlia and Fatima and their sisters in order to ascertain if other such previous deals had been carried out with the intention of evading RPGT.

3. Ask the Singapore government for its cooperation in any commercial activities or transactions involving the named individuals in the Global Witness video to ascertain if these deals were done in order to evade tax and/or to circumvent the 49 percent foreign shareholding limit.

If Najib were to keep an 'elegant silence' with regard to the Global Witness account, it would be a mockery of his signing of the Election Integrity Pledge.

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