

Gov't 'trespasser' on land acquired pre-Merdeka

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Decades after its acquisition, a unanimous court ruling found that a large piece of land in Kuala Lumpur, occupied by various government agencies, had been illegally acquired by the then government of British Malaya in 1956.

The High Court decision ruled that the acquisition of 263.272 acres of land owned by private firm Semantan Estates (1952) Sdn Bhd was not "lawfully" executed and that the government has been "a trespasser" ever since.

azlanMade on Dec 29, 2009, the High Court ruling was subsequently upheld by the Court of Appeal on May 18, 2012.

The Federal Court then refused leave to appeal to the government on Nov 21, 2012, thus effectively making the High Court ruling final and binding.

Public records show that Semantan Estates has only two directors, who are 76 and 85 years old respectively.

At press time, Semantan Estates was in the process of being liquidated and had no assets or liabilities.

Notably, one of Semantan Estates' directors is Ng Tian Ming, who is also listed as a director of property developer Eng Lian Enterprise Sdn Bhd which developed the Bangsar Baru neighbourhood, widely said to be heart of Bangsar.

Eng Lian Enterprise is the second largest shareholder in main market-listed Toyo Ink Group Bhd with 3,891,410 shares or 9.09 percent, according to Toyo Ink's annual report for 2012.

Ng appears to be the founder of Eng Lian Enterprise as the date of his directorship appointment coincides with the registration date of Eng Lian Enterprise.

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