

Perak rep slams Umno leader's mini hydro project
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Teja assemblyperson Chang Lih Kang has questioned Perak's project to build a number of mini hydroelectric dams, which he says has landed in the hands of an Umno division chief.

Describing the recipient as a "professional government project taker", Chang alleged the Bukit Gantang Umno division chief Syed Abu Hussin Hafiz Syed Abdul Fasal (right) already has received seven other government projects since 2008, through a number of companies.

These supposedly include contracts for catering services for the Malaysian Armed Forces and bus services in Manjung, Perak.

To a question, Chang said at least three of these projects had been awarded through direct negotiations, but he is uncertain how the other five projects - including the hydroelectric project - had been awarded.

"We cannot accept that a huge share (of projects) has been given to a company owned by a crony," Chang told a press conference today.

The project started in 2012 was for Perak Hydro Renewable Energy Corporation (PHREC) to build 31 mini hydroelectric dams for a total capacity of 292 megawatts, which Chang estimates would involve a capital expenditure of RM2.92 billion.

The state government owns a 40 percent stake in PHREC, while the rest is owned by Gunung Capital Bhd, of which Syed Abu Hussin Hafiz is CEO and executive chairperson, via its subsidiary Pusaka Hijau Sdn Bhd.

Chang has also questioned the circumstances under which Gunung Capital took over Pusaka Hijau in Aug 2013, and says he suspects it was an attempt by Syed Abu Hussin Hafiz to cover his tracks.

At the time the project was awarded in 2012, he claimed, Pusaka Hijau's representative on PHREC's board was another Umno leader, the then Bukit Chandan assemblyperson Khair-il Anuar Wan Ahmad.

Khair-il Anuar is now the Kuala Kangsar MP.

Chang said PHREC signed a supplemental agreement with the Perak state government on April 29, 2013, to build six more mini hydroelectric dams, which brought the total number from 25 in 2012 to the current 31 dams.

New modus operandi to keep name off

In August - just four months later - Gunung Capital took over Pusaka Hijau by buying a 85 percent stake of the company.

“After many (previous contracts) have been linked to Syed Abu Hussin Hafiz’s company, we suspect that this is a new modus operandi, where his name will not appear when a contract is awarded.

“But in the end, he is the one who gets the project. We therefore question the government: is the entire process is planned just to enrich BN cronies and pull wool over the people’s eyes?” Chang asked.

Asked about the current status of the project, he says PHREC’s website states that the project has already started, but he has been informed that only some ‘preliminary work’ had been done.

Malaysiakini has contacted both Syed Abu Hussin Hafiz and Khair-il Anuar Wan Ahmad for comment, and has yet to receive their response.

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