

'DAP okayed Kidex - why oppose now?'
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MCA has slammed Selangor DAP assemblypersons for their vociferous criticism of the Kinrara-Damansara Expressway (Kidex), pointing out the party was part of the same exco that approved the project in 2012.

"It was the Selangor state executive council that gave the approval to Kidex.

"DAP state assemblypersons should stop blaming the Selangor Menteri Besar (Abdul Khalid Ibrahim) on the Kidex issue as he alone cannot legally approve Kidex," Petaling Jaya Utara MCA division Youth chief Andy Lee Vee Meng said in a statement today.

Lee said among the DAP leaders in the exco then were Teresa Kok and Ronnie Liu, besides Ean Yong Hian Wah and Teng Chang Khim (left) who are still exco members.

First-term assemblypersons Yeo Bee Yin (Damansara Utama) and R Rajiv (Bukit Gasing), who were elected in 2013, have criticised Khalid for his supportive stance on the controversial project.

Lee said for Rajiv, Yeo and others to claim they were not aware of Kidex for the past few years posed a big question mark, and he questioned their honesty and competency.

"They did not consult the local residents before approving Kidex," he asserted.

Freeze on land lots

He said it was the same exco that published a gazette, on July 18, 2013, under Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act, freezing 3,784 land lots within 100 metres of the expressway's proposed corridor from being traded.

It was only based on this approval that the proposed highway owner, Kidex Sdn Bhd, signed the concessionaire agreement with the federal government in November 2013, Lee added.

The Selangor government last Wednesday declassified the minutes of the exco meeting that approved, "in principle", the project on Feb, 15, 2012, after a resident requested for the documents under the Freedom of Information (State of Selangor) Enactment 2011.

The minutes revealed the state government had set out a few conditions for the proposed highway, including an early termination clause, should the concessionaire achieve its projected profit earlier than expected.

It also called for a gazette of the lands affected by the proposed highway so as to impose a freeze on any transaction.

Kok: Only preliminary approval

When contacted, Kok, who was then a senior exco member, said the decision was merely a "preliminary approval".

"When we heard that the highway would have tolls, we were also uncomfortable but we gave preliminary approval so that a more detailed study could be conducted together with the local councils and also get feedback from the people," Kok told Malaysiakini.

She said Kidex was not the only highway that came before the exco and it had similarly handled several other highways.

Kok (right) said when the Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) presented the Kidex proposal to the Selangor exco, it was also merely a draft.

"Even now, when I meet people, I say there is no need to be emotional as nothing is final yet and Kidex will need to make adjustments or changes based on the people's feedback," said the Seputeh MP.

Meanwhile, Liu told Malaysiakini the alleged "approval" MCA was harping on was merely to look into the proposal for the highway and not for its construction.

"The project was never approved (for construction). To approve a project you need to go through many things first," Liu said.

To date, the Kidex highway has yet to be gazetted in the Selangor infrastructure development master plan following fierce opposition from local residents. Gazetting is a prerequisite for the project to go ahead.

The RM2.4 billion project has been a lightning rod for disputes as it will cut through densely populated residential areas in the heart of Petaling Jaya.

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