

Felda sued for RM200mil by disgruntled settlers
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SEREMBAN - Disgruntled settlers from Felda Serting Hilir and Felda Raja Alias are suing the Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) for RM200 million, claiming they were cheated over oil extraction prices for the past 15 years.

The 766 settlers filed their lawsuit at the High Court here Monday, claiming Felda had only paid them for palm oil harvested at an extraction rate of 16 to 19 percent when they had actually achieved 24 to 25 percent.

The settlers' spokesman Karip Mohd Salleh was quoted by a web news portal as saying, ""We have suffered losses of about RM200 million, so we are only demanding what is owed to us."

Felda is controlled by the Umno-led government, under the direct charge of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak. It recently reported a 67 percent plunge in cash reserves from RM4.08 billion in 2004 to RM1.35 billion in 2009.

The settlers named Felda and its subsidiary Felda Palm Industries Sdn Bhd as defendants.

It was reported that Felda spent RM2 billion on replanting crops and there were also investments in property in Malaysia and overseas.

PAS treasurer-general Hatta Ramli was quoted by Malaysian Chronicle as saying, "The settlers now are better educated. . .they know about Felda spending money on luxury projects."

"Why doesn't it use the cash to improve the Felda facilities or for research and technology into high-yielding crops. Are they trying to benefit any cronies?" said Hatta.

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