

Ex-GM: Kasitah betrayed me

Names of two others also in notebook

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KUALA LUMPUR: A former Sabah Land Development Board (SLDB) officer told the High Court here that Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam and two others had betrayed him, although he had saved them from police and the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) investigations.

Former SLDB general manager Datuk Mohd Tahir Jaafar, 56, said he trusted the three for being Muslim officers but they had betrayed him instead for power and money amounting to RM56mil through the sale of SLDB shares.

He said the two others were deputy general manager (administration) Salim Mohamad and former SLDB general manager Datuk Wasli Mohd Said.

These were among the notes contained in a notebook which Mohd Tahir had written and signed on Oct 16, 1996, his last day in the SLDB. The notebook was tendered as evidence in Kasitah's corruption trial.

The contents were read out by Mohd Tahir on the fourth day of the corruption trial yesterday when asked by Kasitah's counsel Datuk Muhammad Shafee Abdullah.

»Officers do work on holidays. It is a normal day for me. I went to work«

DATUK MOHD TAHIR

Queried on what he meant by saving the three from police investigations and the ACA, Mohd Tahir said it was related to SLDB contracts that had been given out earlier.

Asked if his statements were recorded by the ACA for investigations into those SLDB contracts, he said no.

"A letter from the ACA was passed to me, requesting if they should proceed to investigate it," he said, adding that he replied that an investigation should only proceed if there was "sufficient evidence and if not, they should stop and let them continue with work."

Asked on why he did not lodge a report, he said he did not know whether he should do so.

On a May 30, 1996, entry in his diary that was also tendered as evidence, Mohd Tahir denied that he had fabricated evidence to implicate Kasitah.

The diary contained details of Kasitah's order to sell 16% of SLDB shares in Sapi Plantations Sdn Bhd to two bumiputra companies in a telephone conversation with him.

When pointed to the fact that the day was a public holiday because of the Harvest Festival, Mohd Tahir said: "Officers do work on holidays. It is a normal day for me. I went to work."

At the outset of the hearing yesterday, Mohd Tahir agreed that Kasitah's idea to dispose of 16% of the board's shares in Sapi Plantations was reasonable.

He also agreed that he had been investigated by the ACA when working at the Sabah Islamic Council in the mid-1980s.

The hearing before Judicial Commissioner Suraya Othman continues today.

KASITAH CORRUPTION TRIAL

> ACCUSED

Former Land and Co-operative Development Minister Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam



> CHARGES

1. CORRUPT PRACTICE

Kasitah is alleged to have used his position as Sabah Land Development Board (SLDB) chairman for his financial gain by taking part in the decision to approve a proposal for the sale of 16.8 million shares held by the board in SAPI Plantations Sdn Bhd to Briskmark Enterprise Sdn Bhd, whereby he had been promised 3.36 million shares in SAPI Plantations by former SLDB general manager Datuk Wasli Mohd Said.

2. CHEATING

Kasitah is alleged to have deceived the SLDB board by omitting to disclose to them the offer by PPB Oil Palms Sdn Bhd, which he knew on Sept 13, 1996, to allocate five shares of the company for each share of SAPI Plantations in the proposal by PPB Oil Palms for listing on the KLSE.

He thereby dishonestly induced them to approve the sale of 16.8 million shares held by SLDB in SAPI Plantations to Briskmark Enterprise whereas they would not have approved the sale if they had known about the offer by PPB Oil Palms.