

Dr Mahathir To Be Called As Witness In Ling's RM1.08 Billion Cheating Trial
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 2 (Bernama) -- Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be called as a witness at the trial of former transport minister Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik in the RM1.08 billion cheating case relating to the Port Klang Free Trade Zone (PKFZ).

The issue of calling Dr Mahathir to testify came up after deputy public prosecutor Datuk Tun Abd Majid Tun Hamzah who is leading the prosecution team, questioned second witness Datuk Sahari Mahadi on a letter dated June 29, 2002, written by Dr Ling to Dr Mahathir, the prime minister at that time.

After the question was posted to Sahari, former director of the Shah Alam Valuation and Property Services Department (VPSD), Tun Abd Majid told judge Datuk Ahmadi Asnawi who presided over the trial that the prosecution would call the former prime minister as a witness relating to the letter.

The letter written by Dr Ling to Dr Mahathir was to inform that negotiations between the Port Klang Authority (PKA) and Kuala Dimensi Sdn Bhd (KDSB) had been held on the purchase of the land based on conditions and terms agreed by VSPD.

Dr Ling, 68, faces an amended principle charge of cheating the Malaysian government by deliberately concealing from the Cabinet the additional interest rate of 7.5 per cent a year on the purchase price of a land in Pulau Indah based on RM25 per sq ft, which came to RM1,088,456,000, when he knew that the VPSD had taken into account the coupon/interest rate when the rate was fixed.

He also faces two amended alternative charges of cheating the government by not exposing to the Cabinet the facts relating to the interest rate, and cheating the Cabinet into believing that the facts relating to the purchase of the land were certified and agreed to by the VPSD when he knew there was no such consent.

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