

**Former PKA chairman inked land deal without Cabinet go-ahead**  
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**By Yow Hong Chieh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 3 — Tan Sri Ting Chew Peh revealed today that he signed off on the 1,000-acre Pulau Indah land buy as Port Klang Authority (PKA) chairman without official confirmation from Cabinet despite knowing government procedure.

The former housing and local government minister told Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik's graft trial it was "the usual practice" to carry out Cabinet decisions only after Cabinet meeting minutes have been verified, but admitted he approved the purchase before that.

"The S&P (sales and purchase agreement) was signed before official confirmation from the Cabinet?" deputy public prosecutor Manoj Kurup asked.

"When I signed the S&P I wasn't aware of this letter (from Cabinet)... There was nothing in black and white," Ting (picture) replied.

Ting also said he did not read through the S&P agreement with landowner Kuala Dimensi Sdn Bhd (KBSB) and had relied on general manager Datin Paduka OC Phang and PKA's legal adviser to fill him in on its contents.

Retired Transport Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Zakaria Bahari testified last month that Dr Ling had given Phang his approval to sign the agreement on November 6, 2002 after a Cabinet meeting that same day despite not getting the Cabinet's formal decision until some two weeks later.

Phang, together with Ting, had inked the deal with KDSB on November 12, 2002.

Dr Ling, a former MCA president, was charged in July last year with knowingly deceiving the Cabinet into approving the land purchase for the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ), which resulted in wrongful losses for the government.

The prosecution has argued that the additional interest of 7.5 per cent per annum, amounting to some RM720 million, had pushed PKA's land purchase from RM1.088 billion to RM1.88 billion for the port project.

This was despite knowing that the government's Valuation and Property Services Department (JPPH) had already taken the interest into account when it valued the land at RM25 per square foot.

Former Transport Minister Dr Ling also faces two alternative charges of deceiving the Cabinet into believing that the purchase at RM25 psf and the 7.5 per cent interest rate were acknowledged and agreed to by JPPH despite knowing that there was no such agreement.

The veteran politician faces up to seven years' jail and a fine if convicted of the principal charge under section 418 of the Penal Code.

The hearing continues tomorrow.

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