

Yayasan Selangor GM says unaware of foundation protocols
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By Lisa J. Ariffin

SHAH ALAM, March 6 — The general manager of Yayasan Selangor said today he was not aware of foundation protocols when he decided to spend almost RM300,000 on a luncheon two years ago.

"I was not aware of protocols I had to follow, and was not advised by anyone to consult the board of trustees before making the decision. I thought it was under the jurisdiction of the supreme council," Ilham Marzuki (picture) told the Selangor State Competency, Accountability and Transparency Committee (Selcat) at a public hearing here.

"It was a mistake and it won't happen again," he said.

The state education welfare body's general manager was alleged to have misused RM270,750 in public funds to organise the foundation's 40th anniversary luncheon in 2010. He denied the claim.

He also denied abusing funds amounting to RM446,270 in "souvenirs" and "other purchases" for the overall celebration, which was cancelled after the Selangor Sultan snubbed the luncheon over its exorbitant cost.

Ilham, who had sanctioned the event without consulting the foundation's board of trustees, repeatedly told the panel, led by Selangor Speaker Datuk Teng Chang Khim, he "thought it was under my jurisdiction to make the decision and it will not happen again".

Additionally, he defended his decision in hiring the company in charge of the luncheon, Tetuan Drift Z Enterprise, through direct tender, saying "there was not enough time for open tender".

"To have open tender we would have required eight weeks to process. One month for tender, two weeks for evaluation and another two to award the contract. We only had four weeks before the event," he explained.

When told it was not foundation protocol to hire event organisers as the Selangor Secretariat was ready to assist with the celebration, Ilham said: "I was not told we don't need event managers. Nobody told me of this protocol."

"I have limited knowledge on this protocol issue," he added.

Asked if Yayasan Selangor had received full or partial refund from Drift Z following the cancellation of the event, Ilham said: "It was cancelled at the last minute and there was no time for negotiations.

"We have issued them a cancellation notice, but up until now we have received no response."

Yayasan Selangor is also being investigated for spending lavishly on four other events including a fishing competition, a breaking of fast function and a Hari Raya Aidilfitri function, amounting to RM694,428 in total, which Selcat had slammed as "events completely unrelated to the foundation".

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