

KGNS privatisation shows all races victims of BN land grabs, says Guan Eng
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, April 17 — The DAP accused the Najib administration today of an attempted land grab in the proposed privatisation of 330 acres of prime land controlled by Kelab Golf Negara Subang (KGNS) worth a reported RM5 billion.

Party secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said that the reported bid by tycoon Tan Sri Syed Mokhtar al-Bukhary and property giant Sunway Bhd without open tender was “another potential land grab” similar to the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project where mostly Chinese landowners are refusing to vacate their premises.

“The only thing Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Barisan Nasional (BN) have managed to prove is that regardless whether 1 Malaysia is genuine or sincere, there are no racial boundaries when it comes to daylight robbery of land grab.

“It is not just the Chinese, Iban, Kadazan, Orang Asli or the Indians but even the Malays who have become victims to the ‘1 Malaysia’ land grab,” Lim (picture), the Penang chief minister, said in a statement.

The Edge reported yesterday that Perspective Land, a private investment vehicle controlled by Syed Mokhtar, and Sunway City, an arm of the Sunway group, had submitted a development plan late last year for the land in a development that could raise suspicions about Putrajaya’s ongoing legal action against the golf club.

The bid comes as the club, which says ex-statesmen, senior generals and former civil servants make up a third of its membership, is fighting a lawsuit by the federal government to force KGNS to pay market rates for the asset.

But KGNS president Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas denied that the billionaire industrialist had made a bid for the land that sits in the middle of established and rapidly developing Subang Jaya, Ara Damansara, Kelana Jaya and Bandar Sunway.

Megat Najmuddin, who is also chairman and independent director of Tradewinds Corp, another Syed Mokhtar-linked company, told The Malaysian Insider that he had spoken to two directors of Perspective Lane who denied having submitted a privatisation proposal.

He also said such a move by Putrajaya would be “political suicide” as the club’s members are “not just anyone.”

Lim said today the KGNS “piratisation exemplifies the rent-seeking and crony capitalistic culture synonymous with the BN government” and noted that Megat Najmuddin had denounced the move despite being a member of the Umno’s disciplinary committee.

The issue of ownership of the land has been a source of friction for half a century as the club was set up in the 1960s without clearly defining the ownership of the acreage which is

now home to two 18-hole golf courses.

The government and KGNS entered into a 99-year lease in 1971 but several government agencies began demanding a greater say over the management of the club.

The club eventually lodged a private caveat to defend itself in 2004 but a task force chaired by Megat Najmuddin on June 17 decided against extending it just six days before it expired.

Minutes of the meeting sighted by The Malaysian Insider showed that the decision was made to preserve Megat Najmuddin's ties with the Najib administration.

The club was opened in 1968 and currently has a "month-to-month" informal lease on the land, according to the KGNS chief.

When KGNS first moved to the present site, the land was far less valuable as it was in the middle of rubber estates and former tin mining land, and the golf club today with its many matured trees presents a much appreciated piece of greenery in the fast developing Kelana Jaya area.

After the government filed its legal suit last year to regain control, it gave rise to speculation that the golf courses have been earmarked by the government for sale to developers to build high-end properties.

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