

DAP presses Tee Yong on his RM1b Selangor scandal
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 11 — The DAP is pushing Datuk Chua Tee Yong to prove a RM1 billion land scandal in Selangor, saying today it has shown that property developer Talam Corporation Bhd repaid its RM392 million debt in a “round-tripping” financial exercise.

The war of words between DAP and MCA over Pakatan Rakyat-ruled (PR) Selangor’s financial administration erupted last week even as both parties were also clashing over Penang’s hill development programmes with less than a year to go for the next general election. PR also rules Penang, apart from Kedah and Kelantan.

“Datuk Chua Tee Yong must tell us where is Selangor’s RM1 billion land scandal, or has it become his RM1 billion mega-blunder?” DAP national publicity secretary Tony Pua said in a statement this morning.

Pua and PAS MP Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad have been at the forefront of defending Selangor and Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim’s state administration, although the menteri besar has yet to reveal all details in a promised White Paper since three years ago.

“We have also proven that Datuk Chua not only could not tell the difference between debit and credit columns of a balance sheet, he had the uncanny subtraction ability of ‘two minus one equals three’, which resulted in the impossible figure of RM1 billion mega-blunder.

“However, since then, Datuk Chua has failed to respond or clarify on his mega billion-ringgit blunder. He only said during his press conference on 5th July 2012 that he’ll reply ‘once he has gathered further information’,” said the Petaling Jaya Utara MP.

Pua noted that Chua, a deputy minister, has yet to respond or correct any of his statement over the matter. Chua is Labis MP and son of MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek.

He also replied to Chua’s claims of a RM57.3 million “overpayment” to Talam Corp for 53.74 hectares of land in Danau Putra, Selangor, saying land valuer Chartwell ITAC International had already adjusted the valuation, which the deputy minister missed out when revealing the details.

Chua had claimed that the land was over-valued as 80 per cent was submerged and would need more than RM50 million to fill up before any development could commence.

“Datuk Chua seems to have failed to read in the same paragraph of the report that Chartwell has already ‘made further adjustment to our valuation by excluding the estimated cost of earth filling of the area under water’,” said the DAP lawmaker.

He said after the deduction, Chartwell gave a professional valuation of RM93.5 million for the land, which “is even higher than the valuation of RM87.7 million given by state government”.

“Hence Datuk Chua’s accusation that the state has failed to take into account of the submerged land and overpaid as a result, is another simple case of double-counting. Datuk was basically trying to deduct the cost of filling the land again, even after it has been taken into consideration by the professional valuer,” Pua said.

The Petaling Jaya Utara MP also picked on Chua's allegation over an auction for one of four land parcels due to a legal matter that led to the claim of a RM57 million overpayment.

"A look at the publicly-available January 2012 Talam Corporation Bhd Annual Report will immediately disclose the history of the legal complication. Bangkok Bank Bhd (BBB) had erroneously auctioned the above said property on 7 September 2010 despite being aware that the land is part and parcel of properties being disposed to Menteri Besar (Incorporated) (MBI) under a settlement agreement entered into on 12 March 2010.

"Talam has taken legal action against the bank to recover the losses from the land, where the bank auction purchaser bought for RM15 million, well below the transacted value with MBI of RM48.7 million," he said.

Pua also said that Talam has disclosed in the annual report that "the disposal of this property will not have any significant impact on the MBI settlement agreement" and "if necessary, the company will identify a piece of land to replace the abovementioned to MBI".

"This proves that the state government will not lose a single sen over the above transaction, unlike what was alleged by Datuk Chua Tee Yong," he added.

In his press conference yesterday, Chua said the disclosure of the "questionable purchase" was part of "the RM676 million purchase of assets from Talam by the Selangor PR government".

Last week, he alleged that Selangor had used RM1 billion in public funds to bail out Talam, but then appeared to scale back his claims to an overpayment of RM42 million in a land purchase.

Khalid has threatened to sue Chua, and Trinity Corporation (the new name for Talam) has also issued a full rebuttal of Chua's RM1 billion claim.

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