

Selangor BN accused of buying cheap public land to build condo
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PETALING JAYA, Dec 4 — Selangor Umno had sold off a two-acre piece of prime land in Kelana Jaya here to gain profits instead of building community centres as claimed, DAP lawmakers revealed today when rebutting Barisan Nasional's (BN) denial in a multimillion ringgit land grab scandal exposed recently.

The plot of land is among the 24 pieces that Selangor Pakatan Rakyat (PR) representatives have alleged were sold at below market rate to BN component parties during the pact's rule.

According to state DAP deputy chief Tony Pua, the plot in Kelana Jaya was sold to Selangor Umno at RM1 per square feet or a total of RM87,000, far below the market value of RM17.5 million.

He told a press conference during a site visit with reporters that BN's defence was that the land was used for welfare purposes, such as the construction of multipurpose halls and kindergartens for local residents.

"But instead, in this case, the land bought by Selangor Umno was sold to a developer to construct this medium-cost condominium," he said.

Pua added said that the gross development value of the 200-unit condominium was over RM900 million, with each unit costing some RM450,000.

He said this meant that Selangor Umno had likely turned hefty profits from selling the plot to the developer firm, which lists several Chinese businessmen as directors.

"Don't get me wrong, I am not faulting the developer. But if BN is going to claim that it has been protecting the interests of the Malays in Selangor, then where is proof of this?"

"They bought the land at such a cheap rate in 2004, sold it in 2005 to the developer and in 2006, this condominium was launched," he said.

The Petaling Jaya Utara MP demanded that profits earned from the sale be returned to the state government or disbursed directly to Selangor folk.

Sekinchan assemblyman Ng Suee Lim, who had exposed the alleged land grab during the Selangor assembly sitting last month, said the condominium proved that BN was willing to abuse its power to enrich its own members.

"Where is the transformation that BN has been harping about?" he asked.

Subang Jaya assemblyman Hannah Yeoh, who was also present at today's site visit, said when PR took over in Selangor after Election 2008, Mentri Besar Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim had put an immediate halt to the sale of any land to political parties and politicians.

"If BN has no problem lying inside the legislative assembly, imagine what they could do outside. There was no apology; they denied, lied and even justified that it is absolutely okay for them to take the land," she said.

Selangor backbenchers had alleged last month that BN parties Umno, the MCA, MIC and Gerakan were sold a total of 24 pieces of land, collectively worth RM300 million, in seven of nine districts in the state at merely RM1 per square foot during BN's rule between 2000 and 2008.

They alleged that of the 24 plots, 15 are now owned by Umno branches or divisions, with six of them going to the Sungai Besar Umno division, which was led by former Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Khir Toyo.

Also implicated in the scandal are former MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, together with an S. Subramaniam and the late Tan Sri S.O.K. Ubaidullah, who was one of the MIC's founders, who are allegedly named as the trustees for a 2,832 square metre plot in Kuala Selangor.

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