

Press Clipping

Port Klang Free Zone

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Committee seeks answers

Shahrir: Explain port free zone project

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) wants to know why the Attorney-General's Chambers asked the Government to acquire land for the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ).

PAC chairman Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad said after briefing on the project at the Parliament building yesterday that they also wanted to find out why the Port Klang Authority bought the land from the Selangor Government instead.

He said the land's value was probably affected by the decision made at that time to either purchase the land, as requested by the Selangor Government, or acquire it through established procedures.

"Once a choice of a willing buyer-willing seller, as opposed to acquisition, is made, it erases the cost differences of the land's value compared to its value previously.

"We will invite the Attorney-General (Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail) to give us a briefing on his legal opinion on the differences in land value.

"The Selangor Government's view at the time that the land should be purchased and not acquired also made a difference in the land value.

"We are going back to 2000 and 2001 when the decision was first made. So, it's something from the records that we need to look into and that's why we are asking for a meeting with the Attorney-General on this.

"It's not easy to make a conclusion. We will also visit the PKFZ site soon," he said.

Among those who attended the five-hour meeting were officials from the Port Klang



Authority, Transport Ministry, Securities Commission, Finance Ministry and the Valuation Department.

Shahrir said the recommended prices of the PKFZ land ranged from RM10.16psf to RM21psf, depending on the acreage and work done on the land.

"There were many land transactions recorded. Four types of valuations had been done between 1998 and 2002 as requested by several parties. We have to reconcile all these matters to find out the true picture.

"The decision to buy the land instead of acquiring it as advised by the Attorney-General's Chambers had raised many speculations and questions.

"We will hold a third meeting on this by inviting the AG soon," he added.

The PAC first met on Sept 6 to discuss the PKFZ issue. Its aim is to determine how the PKFZ project came up to RM4.7bil and the issuance of bonds worth RM4.6bil by the Securities Commission for a soft loan for the project.