Former sec-gen says government aware of PKFZ land buy

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By Asrul Hadi Abdullah Sani, The Malaysian Insider

Former Ministry of Transportation secretary-general Datuk Zaharah Shaari said the Cabinet was fully aware of the land acquisition for the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) project.

In the verbatim of the Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) meeting procedures released Wednesday, Zaharah said the ministry had to "go by Cabinet decision."

PAC reported that the government would have spent RM442.13 and saved RM645.87 million if the land had been acquired for PKFZ in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act 1960.

It also reported that the cost of the land was RM47.76 per square foot, or 67 per cent higher than the RM25 fixed by the Valuation and Property Services Department (JPPH).

Zaharah explained that the ministry and former transport minister Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik had agreed with the Treasury secretary-general that the land be acquired in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act 1960.

"I think the Cabinet was informed that we should go for land acquisition and then the Cabinet agreed that we should go for land acquisition. However in the final stages, the state government did not agree with the land acquisition because the project was abandoned and the party from Dubai informed that if the land is not available… but at certain time, they will pull out," she said.

She added that the matter was referred to the Cabinet for a proper solution and stressed that Ling was in direct contact with the former finance and prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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