

S. C. M. P.

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\$120,000 kuk land report draws protest

By KENNETH KO

A Heung Yee Kuk councillor yesterday questioned the wisdom of paying \$120,000 to three leading barristers to get their opinion on the Government's land policy in the New Territories.

A copy of their "joint opinion," condemning the land re-summption policy as unfair to the NT land owners, has been handed to the British Government.

It was presented to the Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Goronwy-Roberts, when a kuk delegation visited London in April.

The kuk's Chairman, Mr Chan Yat-sun, revealed the barristers' fee at a special meeting of the kuk's 107 councillors.

He said the fee had been paid with a loan from a fund to build a kuk school.

The revelation drew a protest from the Taipo Rural Committee Chairman, Mr Stephen Wong, who said the fee should be paid by the Chairman and the two Vice-Chairmen.

Mr Wong also protested that the councillors were not consulted before the decision was made to engage the barristers.

"The fund is for the construction of a school and nothing else. How are we going to repay the loan?" Mr Wong asked.

Challenging whether the barristers' opinion and the delegation's London visit were necessary, he said:

"It is open to question whether this UK visit has been successful. So far there has

been no reaction. But we as councillors are trusted with the integrity of holding the school fund."

Mr Chan assured Mr Wong that plans for repaying the loan would be made and "we will try our best to raise the money."

He also said the loan was approved at a councillors' meeting which Mr Wong did not attend.

"We decided to engage the barristers because we felt that it would be a historical move to put our arguments on a firm foundation.

"With the barristers' support, the public will know that the kuk is not telling a lie when it says the Government is unfair."

Stating that the decision was correct, Mr Chan said he would welcome Mr Wong's checking the accounts any time.

He added that he had contributed \$20,000 and the

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Kuk report draws criticism

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two Vice-Chairmen \$10,000 each towards the expenses for the UK visit.

The leader of the delegation, Mr Cheung Yan-lung, a Vice-Chairman of the kuk, reported on their activities in Britain.

At the meeting, Mr Chan also supported the action of the Chairman of the Hang Hau Rural Committee, Mr Yau Kei, in killing a leopard cat on Clearwater Bay Road recently.

He said any animal which endangers people's lives or property should be killed.

"Who will compensate us if the animal kills our livestock?" Mr Chan asked.

"The kuk will fully support Mr Yau if any action is taken against him by the Government," he stated.

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