

Muhyiddin mum on missing cows in feedlot project
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today said that there was “nothing unusual” about the Auditor-General’s Report 2010’s findings on the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) project.

“I don’t think there is anything unusual or anything wrong (about the findings)...the audit found weaknesses which will be explained,” he said at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Muhyiddin, who was agriculture minister when the RM73.64 million project was approved, however refused to comment further, passing the hot potato to Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Noh Omar.

“This will be explained by (the minister),” he said.

On Tuesday, PKR said that they will “expose” evidence to implicate Muhyiddin and another cabinet minister whose family is claimed to have benefited from the project, if no explanation is given by Oct 31.

PKR also claimed that the project only fulfilled 0.6 percent of Malaysia’s demand for beef, falling far behind the 40 percent target in the Ninth Malaysia Plan

The AG’s Report found the project a “mess” and that the project meant to meet the demand for beef in the country is more than 4,000 cows short of its obligations.

The audit also found that NFC failed to carry out an entrepreneurship programme as required by the government.

The Auditor-General noted that the project is plagued with problems, with Pernerbadanan Menteri Besar Negri Sembilan having taken back 3,000 acres of the 5,000 acres set aside for the project.

Millions disbursed

RM6.52 million of the RM13 million grant promised have been disbursed to NFC, while a RM134.72 million soft loan was also released.

The Finance Ministry deferred disbursement of the full amount until a “viability and business model project” study is completed.

The ministry is also going through a viability report it requested from UPM Consultancy and Services, received in April this year.

The project, which received a government soft loan of RM250 million, will also be probed by the Public Accounts Committee.

NFC has declined comment.

Anti-apostasy law: Leave it to the states

On a separate matter, the deputy premier advised state religious councils to meet and come to a consensus over the proposal for an Anti-Apostasy Act.

“As former Johor menteri besar, I know that there are state enactments that outlaw proselytisation to Muslims, but if this is not enough then it is up to the state governments,” he said.

He added that the state religious councils must figure out the content of the proposed law and its implications.

"They must also be looked at constitutionally," he said, stressing that Islamic affairs fall under state jurisdiction.

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