

PKR: Probe Shahrizat family's purchases as well
MalaysiaKini.com
January 19,2012

Welcoming the announcement that an audit firm will be appointed to investigate the National Feedlot Corporation, PKR today called for purchases made by cabinet minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's family to be similarly audited.

Proposing this in a statement today, PKR chief of strategy Rafizi Ramli said the audit must include purchases made by the family members from the time of the award of the contract.

NONEThis includes "purchases made in their own names, in order to determine if NFC funds were used for personal purposes".

The scope of the audit, Rafizi said, must include "all large and high volume payments made by NFC and companies linked" to the minister's family.

"This is to determine the background of the suppliers and individuals who dealt with NFC, in order to ensure NFC funds are not used to fund Shahrizat or any other individual's political activities," he said.

Rafizi, who is an auditor by training, also suggested four other areas of interest to be included in the audit:

- * The transfer of funds to third parties, including for purchases of real estate, establishing new companies, operations of these companies, etc, to determine any abuse of funds;

- * Each expenditure claimed by NFC to ensure that they are "true and fair" and directly related to NFC's objectives;

- * The award of funds by the Finance Ministry to ensure Treasury procedures and best practices were adhered to, including reviewing loan draw-downs and agreements; and

- * The project award process, including perusing meeting minutes to ascertain if there was any political interference, and if the project was commercially viable to justify public funding.

"The (scope of the audit) will prove Muhyiddin Yassin's sincerity in investigating the alleged abuse of power.

"As such, I suggest that the terms and scope of the audit be made public upon the appointment of the firm," Rafizi said.

'Table findings in Parliament'

Rafizi, who has been in the forefront of PKR's expose on the NFC scandal, also proposed that the findings of the audit be tabled in the March sitting of Parliament.

"Refusal to take on the scopes suggested would mean that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak does not seriously want to solve the ongoing NFC scandal," he said.

If this was the case, Rafizi added, PKR would support DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang's call for a royal commission of inquiry into the matter.

NFC, which is run by Women, Community and Family Development Minister's husband Mohamad Salleh Ismail and their three children, is currently also under police probe for criminal breach of trust.

The company received RM250 million in a government soft loan for the cattle project, but has admitted to buying luxury condominiums with some of the funds, purportedly as "investment".

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