

**Noh Omar's defence triggered NFC whistleblowers**  
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INTERVIEW With the stream of exposes by PKR on the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) not seeming to ebb, many are wondering about the party's source or sources of information.

NFC owners blame two disgruntled former employees, and have lassoed Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali's help in telling all and sundry that it is these "non-Malay" ex-employees who are out to do them in.

Other NGOs met by Malaysiakini at a recent dialogue between NGOs and NFC chief executive officer Wan Shahinur Izmir Salleh, believe it's a "beef cartel" which is out to 'sabotage' a genuine Malay business.

NONE Laughing off the beef cartel theory, PKR director of strategy Rafizi Ramli told Malaysiakini in a interview last week that the identity is still anyone's guess.

"I did have a PDF (portable document format) copy of the cash payouts which is from a whistleblower, whom I still don't know to this day," he said, adding that it came in an email from someone with the pseudonym 'lembu' (cow).

Calling the suggestion of the involvement of a "beef cartel" an "ugly" attempt by Umno-friendly quarters to turn an issue of misappropriation to an issue of race, Rafizi threw some other theories into the ring.

He said many people would have had access to the cashbook, including those who had conducted the viability study commissioned by the government after the project had already started.

Civil servants and the many employees who were "in and out" of the NFC due to a "high turnaround" of workers could also have had a hand in it.

"The NFC is hell-bent to find out who the whistleblowers are because they don't want any more exposes.

"But the way the emails are written tell me it is not the cartel or disgruntled employees. But I think it's best I keep it to myself," he said.

Minister opened Pandora's box

NONE Ironically, he said, PKR has Umno minister Noh Omar (left) to thank for the cashbook, which was used to source out more damning information about the company's dealings.

He said it was only after the agriculture minister's defence of NFC in Parliament that the cashbook landed in his email inbox.

"So that was the turning point. If Noh Omar hadn't gone to Parliament and said that 8,000-plus heads of cattle was a national success, it could have died there," he said.

Rafizi said that PKR had initially gone on the offensive only on the fact that the project was awarded to a minister's family with no cattle-rearing experience, and not meeting its targets.

"The next day, Public Accounts Committee chairperson Azmi Khalid said PAC will look at this. So we panicked.

"We were like, 'Okay, if they call us, and we don't have anything. It will look really bad on us.' That's when

I said: 'Okay lah, the least we could do is to go down and check the farm site'," he said.

Calling on the National Feedlot Centre in Gemas, Negri Sembilan, under the guise of wanting to buy cattle, Rafizi found out that the centre had at most 1,000-plus cows.

But nothing they found out there could have had the same impact as the cashbook.

It was then that they discovered that the NFC had purchased luxury units at the One Menerung condominium in Kuala Lumpur.

"After Noh Omar's (assertions of project success), I received the cashbook. I glanced through it quickly... and tried to pick up payments that did not fall into place.

"Payments for condominiums, and to high-end property developers certainly did not... make sense with a company of that sort.

"We only knew this when we had the cashbook but we went down (to check). I think we took two or three weeks after the first press conference to expose it," he said.

'We took risks'

He said that 50 percent of the work was PKR's own corroborative work, including going to the property sites and making searches in public databases.

"So another 15-20 percent of it is actually our gut feeling and the risk that we took... because if you want to have complete documents, I don't think you will ever get everything," he said.

Since the cashbook, no 'inside document' have been leaked from the NFC and they have only received anonymous tip-offs in the form of emails and "pieces of papers' dropped," he said.

"But unless we are 70-80 percent confident, we don't go near it," he said, adding that there is more to come despite the lawsuit filed against him.

"(I will continue) until the court tells me to stop, but even if they do, there are always other people who can speak. It doesn't have to be just me. I don't think it is going to have an impact at the rate we are doing things," he said.

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