

**Gerakan deputy chief wants Shahrizat out**  
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Shahrizat Abdul Jalil today received yet another blow, this time from a friendly party as pressure continues to mount on the embattled cabinet minister.

Joining the chorus in calling for the minister's resignation, following her family's involvement in the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) scandal, is Gerakan deputy president Chang Ko Youn.

In a statement, Chang (left) said while he has "much sympathy" for Shahrizat who is facing an "unfair and cruel" attack, she should vacate her ministerial post for the greater interest of the Barisan Nasional.

"(In) the interest of BN, I hope Shahrizat will have the magnanimity to vacate her position as a minister in the cabinet and focus her energy on combating this... assault on her family.

"She can return to the cabinet after this episode is over and her name is cleared," he said.

Conceding that Shahrizat and her family should be treated as innocent until proven guilty, the family should also "robustly" answer the "grotesque" accusations against them.

"(Her) family members must robustly explain their side of the story to dispel any doubt created by the mammoth allegations and copies of document produced. Being a public figure, one is subject to scrutiny," he said.

Chang said the "sacrifice" of the women, family and community development minister's part will release BN of the NFC "burden".

Shahrizat's 'political wisdom'

Meanwhile, according to Bernama, MCA was confident that Shahrizat would exercise "her political wisdom" over the NFC controversy, said party president Dr Chua Soi Lek.

"She is a senior party leader. We have confidence in her making a decision in the best interest of BN and Umno," he was quoted as saying.

Dr Chua (right) said this when asked whether Shahrizat should resign from her cabinet position over the NFC controversy.

On the negative perception generated by the controversy towards BN, Dr Chua said the public should not pre-judge the issue as the police and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) were currently investigating the matter.

"We should let the law run its course. No one is guilty until proven so," he added.

The NFC, headed by Shahrizat's husband Mohamad Salleh Ismail, has been embroiled in a controversy since the Auditor-General's Report for 2010 was pursued by the Opposition since it was revealed last October.

The Opposition has alleged irregularities over the RM250 million soft loan given by the government to NFC.

The NFC is a project in Gemas, Negri Sembilan, aimed at boosting the production of beef to reduce dependence on imported beef.

Yesterday, Shahrizat was questioned by the MACC and maintained that she had never been involved in awarding the cattle-breeding project to NFC, and in the company's decision-making.

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