

Najib defends Bafia charge against Rafizi

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By Nigel Aw

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today defended the charging of PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli under the Banking and Financial Institutions Act (Bafia) for disclosing financial documents related to the National Feedlot Corporation scandal.

"Whoever has information should reveal it to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

"It is not to be revealed to the public because if you reveal to the public you are against Bafia," Najib told a press conference after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting this evening.

"The reason why Bafia is there is to protect the integrity and credibility of the financial system because anyone who has accounts in the financial system must feel well protected.

"Otherwise, people will not put money in the system. People from overseas will not put money in Malaysia and that is against public interest.

"The public interest is there and we must ensure that the financial system cannot be compromised," Najib added.

'It doesn't mean we condone corruption'

However, the prime minister stressed, the charge against Rafizi did not mean that the government was not against corruption.

"It does not mean that we will condone corruption or money laundering because you can always reveal this information to the appropriate authorities," he said.

In a surprise move on Wednesday, Rafizi was charged in a sessions court in Shah Alam, under Section 97 of the Bafia for disclosing four financial accounts related to NFC and its chairperson Mohd Salleh Ismail.

Former Public Bank clerk Johari Mohamad was charged with abetting Rafizi in the offence. Johari was charged under Section 112(1)(c) of Bafia for leaking the documents to Rafizi.

Rafizi had been instrumental in revealing NFC's alleged misuse of a RM250 million government loan supposedly for beef supply on luxury properties and overseas holidays.

NFC chairperson Mohd Salleh was on March 12 charged with two counts of criminal breach of trust involving NFC funds close to RM50 million and another two counts of breaching the Companies Act.

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