

Mohamad Salleh's Attempt At Semantics Is Deplorable

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It is most deplorable and the height of irresponsibility that at this late stage, after three months of continuous almost-daily adverse publicity, the family of Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, the Minister for Women, Family and Community Development, is still trying to shirk accountability with her husband, Mohamad Salleh Ismail, the chairman of National Foodlot Corporation (NFCorp) Chairman claiming that the Auditor-General had confused NFCorp, a private entity, with the National Foodlot Centre (NFC) which is owned by the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Ministry.

The Auditor-General Ambrin Buang has not made any such mistake in his Federal Accounts Report 2010 and I am not aware that he had made any such admission in any subsequent statement.

Mohamad Salleh deserves public censure for his attempt at semantics to avoid accountability and responsibility when the RM336.64 million NFC scandal (which involves the NFCorp scandal) cries out for full disclosure and investigation, as the whole NFC/NFCorp scandal stinks, and is not just a "mess" (which the AG did not say) but a "terrible mess" (which the AG should have said)!

As far as is known, the RM336.64 million NFC/NFCorp scandal comprise three elements:

- (i) RM73.64 million from the Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Ministry under the Ninth Malaysia Plan for NFC's development and operational costs;
- (ii) RM13 million as start-up grant approved to NFCorp in September 2007, to provide infrastructure such as cattle pens and farm roads;
- (iii) RM250 million soft loan, approved to NFCorp via an agreement signed on December 2007.

Is Mohamad Salleh seriously claiming that the NFCorp owes no duty of public accountability and responsibility for any misuse of public funds given to NFCorp as soft loan at 2% interest to promote greater beef self-sufficiency in the country to buy two units of luxury condominiums in Kuala Lumpur and another condominium in Singapore, as well as to buy land in Precinct 10 Putrajaya and close to a million ringgit expenditures on overseas trips?

With the claim that the Auditor-General had confused the two entities, NFC and NFCorp, Malaysians want to know whether the freezing of assets announced by the Prime Minister, Najib Razak earlier this month was with regard to NFC or NFCorp or both.

Who can give this clarification?

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