

**Shamsubahrin charge 'diversion' from NFC scandal, says Pakatan
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 31 — The cheating charge against Datuk Shamsubahrin Ismail is an attempt to divert attention away from the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) scandal, Pakatan Rakyat leaders claimed today.

The opposition pact leaders added that allegations of misappropriating public funds linked to the national cattle farming project remain unanswered.

The case has been linked to minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's family. Her husband, Datuk Dr Mohamad Salleh Ismail, is the NFC chairman and chief executive while their children help run the business.

Shamsubahrin, 45, was charged at the Sessions Court yesterday with cheating Mohamad Sallehout of RM1.76 million in consultation fees by offering the latter fraudulent advisory services.

"The charge brought against Shamsubahrin Ismail shocks the nation and will go down in Malaysian history as the most ridiculous diversion ever attempted.

"The NFC scandal has reached the temperature that the public demands immediate action to recover all the public money spent and bring those responsible for the misappropriation to be accountable," PKR chief strategist Rafizi Ramli (picture) told The Malaysian Insider.

He pointed out that the evidence disclosed to the public so far had been "compelling" and and that it has not been denied "even once" by the NFC, Shahrizat, or any other Umno leader from the ruling coalition.

"That Umno leadership thinks they can make Malaysians believe that the NFC leadership is a victim of a fraud perpetrated by Shamsubaharin, just proves that Umno has lost the plot.

"By the strength of this evidence alone, in other countries with a functioning rule of law (this) would be sufficient to bring Datuk Seri Shahrizat and her family to justice," added the PKR leader.

Rafizi said that PKR would pursue the issue and make sure that the people responsible for approving the project and soft loans are brought to justice.

"PKR will make new revelation next week on NFC - if Umno refuses the rule of law to judge those responsible, then let the court of public opinion judges Umno and its leadership for its failure to act on NFC."

DAP central executive committee (CEC) member Liew Chin Tong said that the charge against Shamsubahrin did not provide any explanation to how federal funds for a cattle project were used to purchase luxury condominiums.

"By charging him it does not mean the original case has gone away.

"Morally, politically something has to be done. Allegations on abuse of funds have to be answered," he told The Malaysian Insider.

The Bukit Bendera MP said that the government should make public the papers and documents relating to NFCorp's cattle project, and that complete transparency was the way to solve the debacle.

Police are investigating NFCorp for alleged criminal breach of trust, following accusations by PKR that the company had misused millions in federal funds meant for a cattle feedlot scheme.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) announced last week it would investigate claims that NFCorp had misappropriated government funds, despite previously saying it would not probe the matter.

The MACC later seized a computer CPU and several documents during a raid on NFCorp's headquarters in Solaris Mont Kiara.

PKR first latched onto the issue after the RM250 million publicly-funded cattle project — run by Mohamad Salleh, husband to federal minister Shahrizat - made it into the pages of this year's Auditor-General's Report for failing to meet production targets. The opposition party has since made several revelations relating to the scandal, including NFCorp's purchase of two multi-million ringgit condominium units in Bangsar and alleged use of project funds to Shahrizat and her family's personal expenses and trips abroad.

It also claimed there was a transfer of resources to unrelated companies in Singapore, as well as the purchase a Mercedes-Benz CLS350 for RM534,622 and two plots of land in Putrajaya's Precinct 10 for RM3,363,507.

The latest disclosure by PKR, made last Tuesday, further alleged that some RM10 million had been diverted towards the purchase of a luxury condominium unit in Singapore for Shahrizat's family.

Shahrizat tried deflecting attention by stating she's "only the wife" of the national cattle farming project's chairman and had nothing to do with the NFC.

The senator has faced calls to quit as minister from within Umno, including from influential former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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