

**Amid NFC uproar, Najib says in control**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
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**By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal**

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 — The government knows how to handle leaders involved in “controversies”, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

In what was probably his first indirect response to the debacle surrounding the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal and Cabinet minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil, the prime minister said his administration knows how to deal with the matter.

“We know, we know how to handle issues,” said Najib (picture) at a news conference at the end of the Umno general assembly here.

A reporter had asked him to comment on Umno supreme council member Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin’s insistence that “the leader involved in a controversy... step down and take responsibility.”

The reporter however did not expressly mention Shahrizat’s name or the NFC in her question.

Bung Mokhtar has stood by his earlier call in asking Shahrizat to resign over the cattle scandal, and agreed the issue had become a liability to Umno.

The outspoken Kinabatangan MP even dismissed the apparent unanimous show of support for Shahrizat during the Wanita Umno general assembly on Wednesday, saying: “We do not know what kind of support that was.”

He said although Shahrizat had briefly explained the issue during the assembly, it was more important to take cognisance of public perception.

Bung Mokhtar said that in the face of coming elections, it was important that Umno not be weakened by scandals linked to any individual.

When addressing delegates during the women wing’s assembly, Shahrizat said she had nothing to do with the RM250 million federally-funded cattle-farming project.

She reportedly earned wild applause from wing members during her speech.

The Malaysian Insider however understands that Shahrizat’s explanation had failed to satisfy a number of leaders in the party who, like Bung Mokhtar, believe the senior minister should bow out of the coming polls.

Bung Mokhtar has been openly critical of the NFC scandal and was the first Umno leader to ask Shahrizat to explain herself.

The Auditor-General’s Report released last month had criticised the NFC, pointing out that it was now “in a mess”.

The report said production in 2010 was only 3,289 head of cattle or 41.1 per cent of the

target set.

But Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar responded on October 31 that the project was a success as it met its target of 8,000 cattle by 2010 once 5,742 slaughtered cattle were taken into account.

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