

Kit Siang calls for full public inquiry on NFC scandal

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 15 — DAP's Lim Kit Siang today demanded an independent, "no-holds-barred" public inquiry to look into allegations of financial misappropriation surrounding the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC), following the prime minister's announcement yesterday that assets of the publicly-funded project had been frozen.

In a statement here, Lim said the mere freezing of assets pending investigations by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the police was inadequate and gave scant indication that this would lead to a full-blown inquiry on the scandal itself.

"What the country needs is an independent, no-holds-barred public inquiry into the National Feedlot Corporation scandal, in particular the roles of all implicated ministers and leaders, including Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Datuk Seri Noh Omar as former and current agriculture minister (respectively), and Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil and other Umno political leaders still unknown.

"Is [Datuk Seri Najib Razak] prepared to announce such a public inquiry or even to establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry, fully assisted by the police and the MACC, into the NFC scandal, declassifying all Cabinet and official documents for such an inquiry?" the DAP parliamentary leader asked.

Najib said yesterday he had instructed Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin along with Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Minister Noh Omar to study how best to resolve the NFC issue.

But Lim argued that the appointment of both Umno leaders to tackle the matter was "unacceptable" as both Muhyiddin and Noh would have been privy to details of the project at one time or another.

Muhyiddin was agriculture minister when the NFC was awarded to Shahrizat's family. He later became deputy prime minister and was replaced by Noh.

Lim said both Umno ministers owed the public a full account of why they had allowed the NFC scandal to reach such a "disgraceful proportion" under their charge.

The NFC issue came to light when the 2010 Auditor-General's Report pointed out that the corporation had badly failed to meet production targets.

Shahrizat applied for three weeks' leave from her duties last week, after new allegations of bribery surfaced recently involving the RM250 million NFC project, which is operated by her husband and two children.

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