

MoF should freeze NFC accounts, says Rafizi
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By Yow Hong Chieh

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4 — The Finance Ministry should freeze the National Feedlot Centre's (NFC) accounts so the company cannot misuse federal funds further as alleged, Rafizi Ramli said today.

The PKR strategic director said failure to freeze the accounts allowed the NFC to withdraw over RM1.7 million last week in what he claimed to be an attempt to pay off police and anti-graft officers probing the company for alleged abuse of public funds.

"That's why, as late as last week, they could take out RM1.76 million with which to bribe the police and MACC (Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission)," Rafizi alleged.

He was referring to Datuk Shamsubahrin Ismail, who was charged on Friday for allegedly cheating NFC boss Datuk Dr Mohamad Salleh Ismail out of RM1.76 million in consultancy fees by offering the latter fraudulent advisory services.

The 45-year-old businessman was charged at the Sessions Court here after being remanded for four days by police and the MACC in connection with their investigation into the NFC.

Rafizi has called the charges against Shamsubahrin a "ridiculous diversion" meant to draw the public's attention away from the scandal-hit company.

The police are probing the NFC for possible criminal breach of trust following PKR's allegations that millions in federal funds meant for the cattle-raising scheme had been misappropriated.

NFC boss Datuk Dr Mohamad Salleh Ismail is married to federal minister and Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil. — file pic

The opposition party first latched onto the issue after the NFC, run by Mohamad Salleh, made it into this year's Auditor-General's Report for failing to meet production targets.

Mohamad Salleh, a former food science head at Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, is husband to federal minister and Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil.

PKR has since made several revelations relating to the scandal, including NFC's purchase of two luxury condominium units in Bangsar and the alleged use of project funds to pay for Shahrizat and her family's personal expenses.

It also claimed there was a transfer of resources to unrelated companies in Singapore, as well as the purchase of 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 a fortnight ago, further alleged that some RM10 million had been diverted towards the purchase of a luxury condominium unit in Singapore for Shahrizat's family.

Shahrizat has tried to deflect attention by stating she is “only the wife” of the national cattle farming project’s chairman and has 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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