

PKR urges Salleh arrest over NFC bribe claims
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 — PKR today gave the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) two weeks to bring Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail to book for allegedly attempting to influence the police into closing their file on the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal.

Failing which, PKR leaders R. Sivarasa and Zuraida Kamaruddin said, the party would lobby for the formation of a royal commission of inquiry (RCI) to probe the conduct of those investigating the RM250 million scandal as well as the graftbusting agency for refusing to punish Mohamad Salleh.

File photo of MACC officers raiding the NFCorp headquarters last month.
“An immediate arrest (of Mohamad Salleh) should be done,” Zuraida told reporters after lodging a complaint with the MACC against the National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) chairman.

Their complaint, said Zuraida and Sivarasa, was based on Datuk Shamsubahrin Ismail’s police report last Friday alleging that Mohamad Salleh had told him to bribe the police to close their probe on the NFC.

The PKR duo pointed out that the authorities had acted very quickly when arresting Shamsubahrin over his cheating charges last month.

Shamsubahrin was recently charged with cheating Mohamad Salleh of RM1.76 million in fraudulent consultancy fees.

The businessman, who is still under remand in Sungai Buloh, was also charged last week with two further counts of cheating.

Sivarasa and Zuraida said if the authorities failed to take similarly swift action against Mohamad Salleh, it would be tantamount to them abetting the act of bribing. Both the police and MACC, they added, should then come under scrutiny for the offence.

“We want to see action within two weeks. If not, we will call for an RCI to investigate the MACC itself — it seems they are incapable of investigating the matter independently,” said Sivarasa.

In his police report last Friday, Shamsubahrin had claimed to have SMS proof that he had been pressured by Mohamad Salleh to bribe the police and close the NFC case.

“I have proof in the form of an SMS. I was not willing to do so although I was pressured repeatedly. I only replied saying I would try to sort out the matter,” the report said.

According to Sivarasa, apart from Mohamad Salleh, other NFCorp officials had sent similar SMSes to Shamsubahrin.

"In Shamsubahrin's police report, he was prepared to say that he has actual proof of that instruction... it means this is not an empty and wild allegation, it is a serious allegation and he is prepared to put it on record," said Sivarasa.

Apart from the bribe claim, Shamsubahrin had also accused Mohamad Salleh of "cheating me by appointing me as Corporate Advisor and Consultant" in November 2011 which he said was a false appointment.

PKR had disclosed an email earlier this month detailing how NFCorp's lawyer allegedly told a MACC advisory board member that an official in the company had been tricked into paying money to a "conman" to influence a police probe into the project.

According to the email, the lawyer told the advisory board member how the NFC official had been tricked into paying money to a "conman" — understood to be Shamsubahrin — to allegedly influence ongoing investigations by the police.

Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas later confirmed to The Malaysian Insider that he authored the email which PKR has presented as proof that a top NFC official had allegedly tried to bribe the police.

NFCorp's assets were frozen after investigations were launched by police and the MACC following a series of exposes by PKR against the NFCorp.

The opposition party has accused NFCorp of spending at least RM27 million in public funds on land, property and expenses unrelated to cattle farming.

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