

Muhyiddin must testify to PAC on NFC, says Kit Siang
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 – Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin must appear before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to explain how the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) became a mess, Lim Kit Siang says.

The DAP parliamentary leader (picture) said Muhyiddin was the best person to answer questions about the troubled cattle raising scheme as the latter had approved the RM300 million project in 2006 when he was agriculture minister.

“Let Muhyiddin appear before the PAC to explain his sins of commission or omission as agriculture minister... resulting in the NFC scandal, and let him explain the extent of Cabinet involvement or approval for the NFC project,” Lim said in a statement today.

He said Muhyiddin, as the Cabinet minister most directly responsible for the NFC, should explain how the project failed to meet production targets instead of leaving current agriculture minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar to do the explaining.

Lim added that PAC chairman Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid should recuse himself from this Wednesday’s probe into the NFC as he was a minister when project was approved and would therefore be party to any Cabinet decision made then.

“Can Azmi categorically declare that he was not involved in any way in any Cabinet approval or discussion of the NFC project before he was dropped from the Cabinet after the March 2008?” he said.

The NFC has been dogged by allegations of corruption and financial impropriety after it made it into the pages of the Auditor-General’s Report, which described the project as “a mess”.

PKR has alleged that public funds meant for the project were used to cover the personal expenses of Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil and her family.

Shahrizat’s husband, Datuk Dr Mohamed Salleh Ismail, heads the NFC, while their children are major shareholders.

The opposition party has also alleged that NFC funds were used to purchase multi-million ringgit condominium units at One Menerung in Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur, a move Mohamed Salleh had defended as an investment.

PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli demanded last week that Cabinet disclose all meeting minutes from 2006 to determine if Shahrizat had been directly involved in awarding the project to her husband’s company.

Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar denied over the weekend that the NFC was ever brought up in Cabinet, claiming it was handled by the

Cabinet Committee for High-Impact Projects then chaired by Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

The NFC is now being probed by the police for cheating or criminal breach of trust and will be investigated by the PAC this Wednesday.

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