

Dewan Rakyat Speaker rejects NFC motion, cites court case
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 — Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia has disallowed an emergency motion to discuss the RM250 million National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) controversy today despite earlier approving it for debate, citing a criminal case on the same issue.

NFCorp chairman Datuk Seri Mohamed Salleh Ismail was charged in court yesterday with two counts of criminal breach of trust and two counts of violating the Companies Act. The food scientist is married to Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil.

“At first I allowed it to be read but now the matter has been brought to court. So I cannot do as I please.

“It cannot be discussed as it has been brought to the judiciary,” said the Dewan Rakyat Speaker.

Wanita PKR chief Zuraida Kamaruddin had tabled the motion saying it was in the public interest as it involved the abuse of a RM250 million federal loan.

“My motion concerns the role of the finance and agriculture ministers in awarding this project and not just the chairman of the company.

“If it had been done properly none of this would have happened,” said the Ampang MP who led calls for Shahrizat to quit politics over the scandal.

Mohamad Salleh was charged yesterday in the Sessions Court here with criminal breach of trust (CBT) and violating the Companies Act in relation to RM49 million in federal funds given to the company.

He pleaded not guilty to the CBT charge as well as two counts under the Companies Act in the scandal that has opened Datuk Seri Najib Razak and the Barisan Nasional (BN) government to damaging attacks ahead of elections expected soon.

Shahrizat announced on Sunday she will quit as women, family and community development minister when her senatorship ends on April 8.

She, however, will continue as Wanita Umno chief despite being dogged for over four-and-a-half months by the NFC scandal.

Shahrizat and her family were accused by the opposition of using public funds earmarked for NFCorp to finance over RM62 million of land, property and expenses unrelated to cattle farming.

The company, tasked with running the national cattle-farming scheme, is headed by her husband and their three children.

The National Feedlot Centre (NFC) project in Gemas, Negeri Sembilan, was awarded to the company in 2006, when Shahrizat was in Cabinet.

NFCorp hit the national headlines after it made it into the Auditor-General's Report last year for missing production targets.

Police recommended last month that the A-G charge NFCorp's directors for criminal breach of trust, but the A-G had asked the police to conduct further investigations prior to charging Mohamed Salleh.

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