

**Pua urges immediate freeze on all NFCorp assets**  
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**By Lisa J. Ariffin**

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 26 — DAP MP Tony Pua today demanded a freeze on all local and international assets of the National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) and its directors to prevent any attempt at disposal, pointing out that it involves RM250 million worth of public funds.

The Petaling Jaya Utara MP said if the firm's assets are not frozen and such disposals are later discovered, the relevant enforcement agencies must then be taken to task for jeopardising public interest.

"The police must take all necessary actions to ensure that the public funds would be recoverable in the event of a charge and conviction," Pua said in a statement here.

He acknowledged that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had already announced last month that the company's assets have been frozen pending a probe into allegations of impropriety in its operations.

But Pua (picture) noted that from the exposes made to date, many of the assets acquired either directly or indirectly with funds meant for the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) project were made in the names of NFCorp's individual directors.

These, he said, included the multimillion ringgit properties purchased with NFC monies in Malaysia and Singapore, as well as companies in Singapore such as MeatWorks (Singapore) Pte Ltd.

"To ensure that these assets are not disposed off at the expense of the tax-payers, the police must now initiate actions to have these properties and assets frozen since they are recommending that the directors be charged for CBT (criminal breach of trust)," he added.

Pua added it was clear that NFCorp had breached the terms of the loan agreement by utilising funds for purposes other than that approved and stressed the need of an immediate freeze.

"It is clear from the NFC loan agreement made available yesterday that NFC has breached the terms of the loan agreement by utilising funds for purposes other than that approved.

"It has already been widely proven and admitted that the directors of NFC had used monies from the loan to acquire properties in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore," he said.

Yesterday, police had asked the Attorney-General's Chambers to charge NFCorp directors with CBT after opposition politicians claimed a part of the government's RM250 million soft loan was used for other purposes.

NFCorp, which operates the national cattle-farming project, is chaired by federal minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's husband, Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail. Their three children also hold executive posts in the company.

The NFC hit the headlines after it made it into the Auditor-General's Report last year, and has continued to hog the limelight after it was linked to Shahrizat and her family.

Since then, PKR has revealed numerous startling exposes over the scandal-ridden project, including allegations that millions of ringgit have been siphoned off for land, property and personal expenses unrelated to cattle farming.

But recently, in response to claims that NFCorp had purchased two luxury condominiums worth RM34 million in Singapore's posh Marina Bay Suites, Shahrizat's son Wan Shahinur Izmir had explained that the company had decided that it would make better use of the money by investing in property during a break in business operations.

The break, said Wan Shahinur Izmir, was caused by the government's decision to suspend the construction of an abattoir that would have been rented to NFCorp. According to Pua, however, the Finance Ministry had told a parliamentary committee last November that there was no provision that permits the NFCorp to use its federal loan to purchase property.

Since the scandal exploded in the media, Shahrizat has been faced with repeated calls for her resignation, even from her colleagues in Umno. But she has insisted that the project had nothing to do with her.

The Wanita Umno chief applied for three weeks' leave from her ministerial duties last month when new allegations of bribery surfaced. She has since resumed her duties.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced last month Putrajaya would appoint an auditor to scrutinise NFCorp's books in light of accusations made against the company, but dismissed calls for a royal commission of inquiry into the NFC.

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