

NFCorp's RM1.7m Kazakhstan office under probe, say sources
The Malaysian Insider
March 07, 2012
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KUALA LUMPUR, Mar 7 — Commercial crimes police are now investigating the National Feedlot Corporation's (NFCorp) purchase of a RM1.7 million apartment in Kazakhstan for use as an office, sources within the department have said.

It is understood that the property, which is located in the southern city of Almaty, was bought in September last year, just a few months after the company signed on to help the Kazakh government breed cattle.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was inked in June 2011 between NFCorp and the Jambyl district of Kazakhstan to raise cattle for export to Malaysia and neighbouring countries.

The deal was one of five signed between Putrajaya and Astana. Malaysia has also pledged to invest in an Islamic bank, oil and gas exploration by state oil company Petronas, energy generation as well as the construction of a hotel.

A source in the commercial crimes department told The Malaysian Insider police were attempting to obtain more details about the apartment, which was registered to NFCorp.

"We are still trying to get the information from abroad," he said, on condition of anonymity.

He added that the apartment appeared to be the company's only acquisition in the oil-rich Central Asian republic, which the Najib administration has sought closer ties with.

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

The publicly-funded company is run by Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail, the husband of federal minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil, and their three children.

NFCorp has been repeatedly accused by the opposition of using its RM250 million soft loan from government for purposes unrelated to cattle farming.

These include the purchase of multi-million ringgit luxury condominium units in Bangsar and Singapore as well as land in Putrajaya.

Questions have also been raised about NFCorp's Singaporean operations — which allegedly include a supermarket — that Salleh has said are necessary as the local market cannot support the company's beef production.

PKR and DAP, however, have said that the company's overseas venture makes no sense in light of its federal mandate to fulfil up to 40 per cent of Malaysia's demand for beef by

2015.

Police recommended last month that the Attorney-General (A-G) charge NFCorp's directors for criminal breach of trust, but the A-G has asked the police to conduct further investigations.

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