

Tee Yong should have looked at NFC scandal and not Talam, says Pua
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By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 6 - The DAP's Tony Pua today questioned MCA's Datuk Chua Tee Yong's fitness to be a Deputy Agriculture Minister, pointing to the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal to suggest that he failed to fulfill his ministerial responsibilities. The federal opposition has alleged that the directors of National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) - the firm that runs NFC - had abused a RM250 million federal cattle farming loan to finance properties in Kazakhstan and Singapore worth at least RM45 million, and to siphon out at least RM12 million to their own companies in the island state.

"Has Datuk Chua Tee Yong delivered his ministerial responsibilities by finding out why a RM250 million soft loan was extended to NFCorp owned by UMNO Wanita Chief Datuk Shahrizat Jalil's family in 2008, two years before a project implementation agreement was even signed between Ministry of Agriculture and NFCorp?" Pua (picture) asked in a statement today.

He claimed that NFCorp "has not paid a single sen back to the Government despite the RM250 million loan being due for its first repayment installment since January 2012", asking if Chua has tried to find out the reason for the alleged non-repayment.

"Let me ask Datuk Chua Tee Yong to state how many times has he visited the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) in the past year to resolve the NFCorp scandal?"

Pua said that Chua should "give Malaysians a reason why he is fit to be the deputy minister of agriculture" if he had not fully carried out his duties over the NFC matter.

The DAP national publicity secretary also appeared to mock his MCA foe's allegations that the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) Selangor government had spent RM1 billion in taxpayers' money to bail out Talam Corporation.

"Will Datuk Chua Tee Yong be as relentless and hardworking in collecting back RM250 million of National Feedlot Corporation soft loan under the purview of his Ministry, as his crusade against the Selangor government over the RM392 million debt recovery exercise?" he asked.

Pua had last month said that the Selangor government had actually recovered the RM392 million owed by Talam Corp to three state subsidiaries, claiming that Chua had done an "elementary double-counting" in arriving at the RM1 billion figure.

NFCorp hit the headlines last year when the Auditor-General reported that it had missed production targets.

Shahrizat, who was a minister when the project was awarded to her family in 2006, relinquished her Cabinet post in early April over the allegations against her family.

On March 12, the NFCorp chairman Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail, pleaded not guilty in the Sessions Court to two counts of criminal breach of trust involving RM49.7 million with regards to the purchase of two condominium units.

Mohamad Salleh, who is also Shahrizat's husband, pleaded not guilty to two other charges under the Companies Act.

Last week, PKR's Rafizi Ramli, who has been at the forefront of the expose, was charged together with a former Public Bank clerk under the Banking and Financial Institutions Act (BAFIA) for disclosing banking documents related to the NFC scandal.

Both of them could be fined a maximum of RM3 million or be jailed up to three years if found guilty.

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