

PAC: Probe into NFCorp to continue

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KUALA LUMPUR: Investigations into the National Feedlot Corporation's (NFCorp) management of the RM250 million government soft loan will continue as it is not related to the charges in court, Public Accounts Committee (PAC) confirmed yesterday.

Its chairman Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid (BN-Padang Besar) told a press conference that it was advised by Parliament Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia not to touch on issues related to the charges in court.

"The speaker had made a ruling

that we should not touch on matters related to the case in court but matters not related to the case can be queried.

"If we have this leeway, we will continue. This is a matter of PAC's integrity and we are striving for checks and balances on government spending and fund management," he said.

Pandikar Amin had yesterday called up Azmi to remind him the PAC cannot discuss anything that is tantamount to sub judice when looking into the NFCorp issue.

He said that any committee formed by Parliament is only an "extension of arms" of Parliament and as such, is subject to the same standing orders.

In response, Azmi said the matter will be scrutinised and the PAC will not touch on any matter that may be sub judice.

"It is not like PAC does not have any experience in such situations.

"We've repeatedly said we have had similar situations before, like the Port Klang Free Zone scandal, and all those called in to testify brought their respective lawyers."

Azmi stressed that PAC is more interested in the aspects of government fund management, how the approval was made, how it was spent, the procedure and weaknesses. "We will call the relevant people to appear before PAC. We are looking at

calling NFCorp (top personnel) directly," he said.

He said PAC has yet to send the letter to summon NFCorp executive chairman Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail, the husband of Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, to appear before the committee.

Mohammad Salleh was charged last week with criminal breach of trust and violating the Companies Act involving RM49 million.

On March 13, Pandikar Amin had rejected an emergency motion to discuss the RM250 million feedlot scandal despite earlier approving it for debate, citing a criminal case on the same issue.