

NFCorp mum at PAC queries

> Company rep refuses to talk on grounds of sub judice

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KUALA LUMPUR: The much-anticipated Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting with the National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) yesterday proved to be a letdown after its representative

refused to answer any query by the committee.

The company, which is involved in the cattle breeding project in Gemas, was represented by its human resource general manager Wan Zurina Saaran.

She was accompanied by two lawyers who insisted she refrain from answering queries as it may be sub judice to court proceedings.

NFCorp CEO Datuk Seri Mohammad Salleh Ismail was charged on March 12 with criminal breach of trust and violating the Companies Act after he allegedly used money from a RM250 million federal loan for personal expenses.

"NFCorp sent a representative but unfortunately she is only the human resource general manager, who was accompanied by two lawyers who did most of the talking.

"They were worried that it (any statement made at the PAC) might incriminate their clients and preferred not to answer questions," PAC member Datuk Abd Rahman Dahlan (BN-Kota Belud) told reporters after the 30-minute meeting in Parliament.

Following this snub, Abd Rahman said the committee will summon Mohammad Salleh to answer the relevant queries by the committee.

"We argued that we could ask questions that do not interfere or touch on the court proceedings, as we had done for the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) case that involved people of higher profile.

"Yet they insisted that it is not appropriate for them to speak," Abd Rahman said.

He said that Zurina also gave the excuse that NFCorp had not received a direct invitation to attend the PAC meeting, but only through the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Ministry.

"That was the excuse given. So we will rectify that by writing directly to the CEO to come for the next meeting.

"We have done this with PKFZ, and the minister (Datuk Seri) Chan Kong Choy came with his lawyers, answered whatever was relevant and told us when he preferred not to answer a question," he said, adding that the committee did not have any problem with that. Abd Rahman said the letter to NFCorp will be sent soon.

On Monday, PAC said the Finance Ministry had confirmed that NFCorp had defaulted on repayments for its RM250 million government soft loan since January.

It is understood that NFCorp was to have made the first repayment of about RM7 million per month from January, as payment was to start three years from the date of the initial drawdown.