

NFCorp failed to pay first instalment, PAC told

IN BREACH: Repayment of RM250m government loan was to have started in January

LING POH LEAN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

THE National Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) has yet to settle the first instalment of the RM250 million soft loan it took from the government, due in January.

Public Accounts Committee chairman Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid said the committee knew about this from Finance Ministry officials who were quizzed about National Feedlot Centre's cattle-breeding project by PAC yesterday.

"We learned that the first repayment was supposed to be made in January, three years after the loan was approved in 2009.

"However, due to some circumstances, NFCorp has yet to make

its first repayment," he said when met by reporters after a four-hour meeting with the officers as well as those from the Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Ministry at Parliament yesterday.

The third meeting will see representatives from NFCorp quizzed by the committee today.

The NFCorp controversy unfolded after the 2010 Auditor-General's Report said the RM250 million project had not met the targets set by the government.

Azmi said the meeting with representatives of government agencies would focus on how the project

first started and why certain procedures were not met.

"There are things we would like to find out from government agencies, such as the reasons why certain procedures were not followed.

"What we have learned so far is that the project was one of the high-impact projects approved under the Ninth Malaysia Plan in 2006.

"The project was then studied again by Universiti Putra Malaysia in 2009 before it was given the

green light to proceed in the same year."

As the case is pending in court,

"There are things we would like to find out such as the reasons why certain procedures were not followed."

Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid

Public Accounts Committee chairman

Azmi said the committee would not cross its limits when interviewing government officers.

"We are guided by certain rules and there are things that are sub judice but this is not the first time we have touched on things that are pending in court.

Last week, NFCorp executive chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mohamed Salleh Ismail pleaded not guilty to four counts of criminal breach of trust and misappropriation of almost RM50 million at the Sessions Court.

→ **Page 1 caption:** Public Accounts Committee chairman Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid, flanked by his deputy Dr Tan Seng Giaw (left) and Ledang member of parliament Hamim Samuri at a press conference on the NFCorp issue yesterday. Pic by Syarafiq Abd Samad