

Salleh pleads not guilty

FOUR CHARGES: NFCorp chairman accused of misappropriating almost RM50m

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NATIONAL Feedlot Corporation (NFCorp) executive chairman Datuk Dr Mohamad Salleh Ismail pleaded not guilty after he was charged with four counts of criminal breach of trust (CBT) and misappropriation of almost RM50 million at the Sessions Court yesterday.

With his wife, Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, and eldest son, Wan Shahinur Izmir, looking on from the public gallery, Salleh claimed trial to all four charges.

The 63-year-old was accused of banking in RM40 million into the account of his company, National Meat and Livestock Corporation Sdn Bhd (NMLC), at a CIMB Islamic Bank Bhd branch in Taman Tun Dr Ismail here between May 6 and Nov 16, 2009.

Salleh also claimed trial to another two counts of CBT and misappropriation of RM9,758,140 belonging to NFCorp by purchasing two One Menerung Condominium units purportedly for NMLC.

He is alleged to have committed the offence at the same bank branch between Dec 1 and Dec 4, 2009.

Salleh is facing a maximum 20 years in jail, whipping and fine, if convicted.

Deputy public prosecutor Dzulkifli Ahmad applied for the cases to be tried jointly. Judge S.M. Komathy Suppiah allowed it.

Counsel Badrulmunir Bukhari urged the court to grant bail of RM50,000 for each charge in light of his client's cooperation during investigation. He also reminded the court that the assets of his client's company had been frozen since investigations began.

"There is no risk my client will abscond," Badrulmunir said.

Gesturing towards the public gallery, he reminded the court that his client's case had received significant media coverage.

"He has voluntarily presented himself in court to clear his name."

He said Wan Shahinur Izmir was willing to act as bailor for his father.

When the judge asked how old the son was, Wan Shahinur Izmir stood up in the public gallery and said he was 32.

Komathy then set bail at RM500,000 for all charges and ordered Salleh surrender his travel documents before fixing April 13 for mention.

The accused posted bail in the afternoon.

Dzulkifli was assisted by DPPs Awang Armadajaya Awang Mahmud and Azimul Azami, while Salleh was also represented by Datuk Ahmad Reza Abdullah, Wan Azmir Wan Majid and Y. Seelan.

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NFCorp executive chairman Datuk Dr Mohamad Salleh Ismail at the Sessions Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Pic by Yong Chee Choong