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PM: Board's duty to lodge report

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BUKIT KAYU HITAM, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said it was the duty of the board of Technology Resources Industries Berhad (TRI) to lodge a police report if they discovered misappropriation of funds in the company.

Stressing that the board of TRI had every right to lodge the police report, Dr Mahathir said it was also the duty of the board to seek redress.

"They have every right to make such reports. If there has been misappropriation of funds, it is the duty of the management and the board of TRI to seek redress," he told reporters after opening the Asian Composites Manufacturing Sdn Bhd plant here.

He was asked to comment on the decision of the TRI board yesterday to lodge a report alleging fictitious invoices for services totalling RM259.3 million issued in 1998 and 1999.

The decision to lodge the report was made after a special board meeting on Tuesday.

The discovery of the invoices followed a number of audits that were still being carried out.

TRI chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Munir Majid said the audits were called to "ascertain the existence of proper records and documentation of the company's business and obligations".

Asked whether the authorities would speed up the investigation, Dr Mahathir said: "Whether it takes a long or short time the report has to be made."

Asked on the possibilities of other companies taking similar action if they came across the same problem, the Prime Minister said it was up to the board of other companies to do so.

In Kuala Lumpur, it was learnt from sources that Federal police will start investigations into the TRI report on Monday.

The report was handed over to its commercial crimes division in Jalan Dato Onn this morning, from their counterparts at the City police headquarters in Jalan Hang Tuah.

Federal commercial crimes director Deputy Commissioner Datuk Maizan Shaari confirmed that the report was lodged but refused to elaborate further.

"I was informed this morning about TRI lodging a police report and that our commercial crimes officers will take over the case. However, I can't give more details, as I personally have not gone through the file yet," he said when contacted.

Meanwhile, city Criminal Investigations Department chief Senior Assistant Commissioner Kamaruddin Mat Desa said the original report was lodged at the Dang Wangi district police headquarters in Jalan Stadium yesterday afternoon.

"It was later passed on to us and we have handed it over to Bukit Aman due to the magnitude of the case," he said.