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Report on fraudulent EPF withdrawals for PM, DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - A detailed report on fraudulent withdrawals from the Employees' Provident Fund will be submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi soon, EPF chairman Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali said today.

Investigations are in progress. The police are also conducting their own interrogations and investigation.

He said EPF was taking steps to tighten procedural weaknesses.

He assured the 10 million-odd contributors that their savings with EPF are safe and that they need not worry.

On Sunday, Abdullah had directed EPF to investigate thoroughly the fraudulent withdrawals from the fund, and there should be no compromise in bringing the culprits to book.

In a statement, EPF deputy chief executive officer (operation) Mohd Zabidi Dasuki said the organisation had further improved their control over the EPF Death Withdrawal Scheme.

He said officers were now required to verify the authenticity of the death certificate with the National Registration Department and other issuing parties such as the police and hospitals.

This would unfortunately cause delay in the approval process for all withdrawal applications under this scheme, said Zabidi.

He said officers would also verify the authenticity of the applicant/nominee with the NRD.

All applicants are required to open a bank account to enable EPF withdrawal payments to be made directly to their bankss.

This is due to the fact that banks had specific security measures for opening and withdrawing funds from bank accounts.

All nominations updated in the last six months prior to the death withdrawal applications would undergo more stringent checks to ensure that the changes were genuine.

This again might cause some delay in the approval process, said Zabidi.

He said EPF was co-operating with police, and employees found to be guilty would be dealt with severely.

This was necessary as the EPF was responsible for safeguarding members' savings and also to instil public confidence in the organisation's credibility, he added.