

Customs: Action soon in cloned APs case

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PUTRAJAYA: The Customs Department has finalised investigation into the cloning of 20 Approved Permits (APs) by a company owned by Senator Datuk Muhammad Abdul Ghani and his son.

They hold the posts of executive chairman and managing director, respectively.

The customs' legal department is perusing the investigation papers and those involved will be charged soon.

Muhammad owns 44% shares in the company. He also owns four other companies which are also involved in the car business. His company receives about 500 APs a year.

"There is no problem ... nothing to hide. The case is now in the hands of the legal department and action will be taken soon," said customs preventive director Adnan Ariffin at his office here yesterday.

He had earlier met Muhammad, who was seeking clarification of his involvement in the case.

Adnan, who declined to discuss Muhammad's case, said investigations on another two companies are on-going.

On Monday, Muhammad, the vice-chief of Umno Kubang Kerian division, told the press he was the person implicated in news reports on a scam by a company using cloned APs to import cars illegally.

The press reports had not mentioned names.

Muhammad had denied he was involved in the cloning or that he had collaborated with his son, claiming he had delegated the running of his company to his son for six years now.

Customs director-general Datuk Abdul Rahman Abdul Hamid had said on Friday three companies, all based in Klang Valley, would be charged under the Customs Act with tax-related offences involving millions of ringgit.

Muhammad told reporters he visited the customs to find out whether he was involved or not and to get a clearer picture of the situation.

He said he was not summoned to give a statement but admitted that Federal Territory customs was investigating his company for suspected involvement in AP cloning.

He said after his own investigation into the matter, he had instructed that all the cars imported by his company using cloned APs to be produced.

"I personally spoke to customs to take back the cars," he said.

He said if his workers or son were involved in the scam, it was up to the authorities to take legal action.

Muhammad said he had delegated the running of his company to his son Muhd Zulaimi, 39, six years ago and he was not aware of what was happening in the company until he conducted his