

Thursday January 19, 2006

PAC: Academy must pay back

KUALA LUMPUR: The National Academy of Motorsports should refund the RM47mil disbursed by the Malaysia Totalisator Board as the sum was not used for welfare purposes, said the Public Accounts Committee.

This was the finding of the PAC which looked into the board's financial transaction as disclosed in the Auditor-General's 2004 annual report. PAC chairman Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad said the board had given the academy RM32mil in 2003 for facilities to provide training in the use of heavy vehicles. In February 2004, the board disbursed RM15mil to the non-profit academy for road safety awareness programme.

"While the board argued that the sum should be viewed as donation for welfare purposes, we find that the activities to provide training for drivers of heavy vehicles was profit-making and commercial in nature because those who sent their people for the training had to pay fees," he told newsmen after a PAC meeting yesterday. Shahrir added that under the Racing (Totalisator Board) Act 1961, the board should distribute money for social and welfare activities, and to promote sports.

"We find that the grants given to the academy do not fit these requirements and we urge the Finance Ministry to decide whether they should pay back or what," he said. Shahrir also said the Federal Territory Auditors Club returned RM99,000 it received from the board for its Family Day after the PAC pointed out that it could create "conflict of interest". The PAC also wants the ministry to reveal the outcome of the study conducted by a global research company on turf clubs, racing activities and regulations, which the Government funded.