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Tax dodgers face jail time

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tax dodgers who have been getting away with civil suits and warnings will face criminal charges from next year, the Internal Revenue Board warned.

Board chief executive officer Tan Sri Dr Mohd Shukor Mahfar said that each year, 20% of the country's taxpayers, both individual and companies, fail to submit their return forms, putting them high on its suspicion list.

"Those who do not submit their return forms will be investigated and those who intentionally evade will face criminal charges.

"This means they run the risk of being jailed for the offence," Dr Mohd Shukor told a press conference at the National Tax Seminar here yesterday.

Tax evaders can face up to three years in jail or RM20,000 fine, or both, if found guilty under the Income Tax Act 1967. [Enter the Kisahku ALMERA Contest now!!!](#) [The Criminal Procedure Code.](#)

Dr Mohd Shukor said, however, while there were these provisions under the law, the board had not "really enforced" them.

Other than 69 criminal cases investigated by the IRB since 2004, the board had only been taking civil action against tax evaders.

"However, we have found that the civil action does not deter them from becoming repeat offenders.

"The amount of money involved is a secondary consideration.

"The main issue to address is the criminal intention to avoid paying their dues," Dr Mohd Shukor said.

He added that many countries were already implementing similar measures.

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"The burden of proof is on us to prove that the individual or company had the intention to avoid paying their dues.

"Of course, we will look at the individual or company's track record before deciding whether to take further action against them," he said, adding that only those who were found to have clearly contravened the laws would be charged.

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Nation, News, Tax dodgers, Tax evaders, Internal Revenue Board, IRB, Mohd Shukor Mahfar, National Tax Seminar, Income Tax Act 1967 Evidence, criminal, Tax, law, Business, jail, fine, Community, Crime, Government

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