



Headline	Fighting corruption by promoting anti-corruption messages and		
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## Fighting corruption by promoting anti-corruption messages and good values

PUTRAJAYA: In 2002, the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) conducted a survey on the 'Public Perception of Corruption in Malaysia'. Results of the survey revealed that 30.5 per cent of the students who were interviewed were willing to accept bribes if they had the power and the opportunity.

The research also showed that in terms of values and attitudes, 15 per cent of the respondents would not mind offering bribes to close business deals, while another 15.7 per cent would have an experienced individual give bribes for their misdeeds.

The findings revealed that the fight against corruption requires a holistic, comprehensive and a long term plan to address not just corruption per se but the all-encompassing problem of ethics and integrity as corruption is a manifestation of the decline of ethics and integrity.

### FIGHTING CORRUPTION THROUGH EDUCATION

The social and cultural practice and acceptance of greasing the wheels of bureaucracy and businesses to get things done only creates a vicious cycle which is difficult to break.

Unless bribery is seen as an unjustifiable and an unacceptable behaviour, anti-corruption initiatives will be equivalent to pouring water into a sieve.

Anti-corruption education is important to fight corruption.

"These worrisome revelations prompted the MACC Community Education Division (PenMas) to take the bull by the horns by championing the formation of Corruption Prevention Secretariats (SPR-IPT) in public institutions of higher learning," MACC's

Community Education Division Director, Deputy Commissioner Datuk Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil, said to Bernama in a recent interview.

These secretariats will increase the public's awareness of anti-corruption programmes and shape personal values not only in campuses but through their socio-interactions and communities too.

Consequently, anti-corruption secretariats were set up in 20 public universities nationwide in 2007. Guided by the PenMas officers, these secretariats organised anti-corruption programmes, including seminars, talks,

workshops and Open Days.

They also participated in the Public Service Video Competition to create public awareness on the drawbacks of corruption and to instill values such as integrity and dignity, especially in those who will be tomorrow's leaders.

### PROMOTING ANTI-CORRUPTION MESSAGES IN SCHOOLS

As the Government Transformation Programme enters its second phase (GTP 2.0), the focus is now on promoting anti-corruption messages in primary and secondary schools.

It is important that these young and impressionable minds recognise corruption for what it is so that they know what to do when they face such a situation.

These children need to know how corruption can erode our social fabric and this can be achieved by incorporating anti-corruption messages and good values such as integrity into the school curriculum. But first and foremost, we need to prepare the teachers.

Thus, the anti-corruption secretariat was extended to 27 teacher training institutes (SPR-IPG) throughout the country during the opening ceremony at the Malaysian Institute of Integrity on Jan 22.

While the SPR-Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSII) provides anti-corruption exposure and experience to future secondary school teachers, those who are part of IPGs equip their primary school counterparts with relevant insights and methodical skills necessary to impart anti-corruption knowledge at the primary school level.

"MACC allocates an annual budget of RM10,000 for each SPR-IPG. However, except for the initial start-up cost of RM3,200, the balance will only be disbursed on a piecemeal basis when these secretariats submit their activity programmes for approval," Shamshun said.

Corruption Prevention Secretariats will also be introduced at the Mara Education Institutes, specifically the UniKL, the Mara Community College, and their branch campuses. This is expected to be accomplished by the end of the year. Anti-corruption ed-

ucation programmes for teachers at secondary schools are in the pipeline.

Meanwhile, anti-corruption ideas have been incorporated into the National Service Training Programme (PLKN). Similar programmes will also be conducted at the National Youth Skills Institute (IKBN).

The PenMas director disclosed that several private universities have expressed interest in forming such secretariats at their campuses as they appreciate the invaluable role played by anti-corruption secretariats in spreading

good values such as integrity.

"However, manpower constraints have forced the division to put such plans at the back-burner for the time being," Shamshun said.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS VITAL

Instilling good values such as integrity in the public also helps to fight corruption.

Informed citizens are more effective in preventing corrupt and unethical behaviours of public servants than most sophisticated codes of conduct, laws and regulations.

People who know right from wrong rarely depart from norms, refrain from being involved in graft, and alert relevant authorities when they see such practices going on.

Hence, apart from students, the MACC Community Education Division has also initiated corruption education programmes across the spectrum, from employees in private and public sectors, students, non-governmental organisation (NGO) officials, to political parties.

However, there is no substitute for individual integrity and the unwillingness of people to compromise on corruption.

The ultimate aim is to create a society that is aware of the threats posed by corruption, and how it affects the welfare of the public and the security of the state. Also, a society should be intolerant towards any form of rent seeking, and should be able to eliminate graft.

Education is a great tool for eradicating poverty. It can be a great tool for fighting corruption too. - Bernama