

# Corruption: Mahathir gives an assurance

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — The Government since independence has never shirked and will not now shirk its responsibilities in eradicating corruption even among members of the ruling party, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad assured the Dewan Rakyat today.

He gave the assurance when opposing a motion by Mr. Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Petaling) seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill which would require every Minister and Member of Parliament to publicly declare his or her assets.

The motion, seconded by Mr. Peter Paul Dason (DAP-Bukit Bendera), was rejected.

This was the third motion moved by Mr. Lim during the current session and rejected by the House.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir described the motion as being of no benefit or value.

Corruption could not be eradicated by having laws such as the one proposed by Mr. Lim, he said.

Instead, he added, a proposal such as Mr. Lim's could possibly further encourage the act of corruption as those concerned could place their property in someone else's name.

## Two methods

He added that there were certainly those who would do so. As an example, he referred to the Malay reservation land where, he said, there were many areas under the names of Malays but owned by non-Malays.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir then spoke of two methods to eradicate corruption.

The first was through the anti-corruption laws and the other, especially for politicians, was through the general election.

On the first method, he said the existing laws were effective in preventing corruption.

He also said that as long as the present Government was in power, the laws would be enforced. Corruption could only be eradicated if the laws were administered by a sincere and honest Government like the present one, he added.

"If we had not fulfilled our responsibilities, we would certainly not still be the Government today," he said.

This was, therefore, proof that the Government which had been ruling for 21 years and gone through five elections was one that was sincere and against corruption.

The Deputy Prime Minister also pointed out that there had been a number of Ministers at the Federal and State levels who had been expelled because of corruption.

On the second method, he said that through the elections the people would be the judge of the leaders they chose and they would certainly not elect those who were corrupt.

The provision of elections would also make every elected represent-

ative fear committing corruption, he said.

He stressed that allegations of corruption must be supported by adequate proof.

Earlier, in moving the motion, Mr. Lim said the most effective way to curb corruption was to have a law requiring Ministers and MPs to annually declare their assets.

"Although at present, Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are required to declare their assets to the Prime Minister when they take up their posts, this is not satisfactory," he said.