

Stop protecting the corrupt, says PM

NST 18 OCT 1988

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The Prime Minister today called on those in authority in the public and private sectors to check corruption among their employees by taking action against those involved.

He said prompt action, rather than the fear of tarnishing the image of the ministries, departments and companies con-

cerned, would go a long way towards discouraging others and demonstrating society's abhorrence for corruption.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said sheltering a few out of pity or to protect the good name of the department or company would only encourage others to succumb to temptation.

There was a need for concerted action and community leaders could contribute through teaching the people good values and by pointing out the evils of corruption.

"If society regards corruption lightly and does not look down on it, corrupt practices will be-

★ TURN TO P3, COL1

PM: Don't spend beyond your means

NST 18 OCT 1988

★ FROM PAGE ONE

come normal and be practised openly," he said at the opening of a seminar, *Towards Increasing Anti-Corruption Programmes in the Civil Service* at the National Institute of Public Administration (Intan).

On the other hand, if people show their hatred for corruption and condemn such practices, it would not spread, he said.

The Prime Minister said the good values practised by a society were the most important

element in overcoming graft and therefore these must be emphasised.

Otherwise, in view of the growing investment in the country, millions of ringgit would be lost to corruption, said Dr Mahathir.

The two-day seminar for heads of Government departments is organised by the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA). It is aimed at identifying the roles of department heads in overcoming corruption as well as formulating an effective anti-corruption programme.

The Prime Minister said cor-

ruption was everywhere and chances of completely eradicating it were slim. The difference between the various countries was the extent of corruption and whether it was done openly.

He said people resort to corruption out of greed and avarice.

He said if it was due to the lack of money then those who have higher incomes would not be involved.

"However, we all know that those who are in the higher income bracket ask for more."

He said when a certain country which was well known

for corruption tried to check it by increasing three-fold the salaries of civil servants, the result was that the amount of kick-backs also went up three times.

The Prime Minister also noted that there were times when the corrupt tried to thwart calls for anti-graft values by accusing those who made the calls of being involved in corruption.

He said the key to avoiding acts of corruption was to contain greed, not to spend beyond one's means and to avoid gambling.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia could still take pride in the fact that corruption was not so rife to the extent that it was carried out openly.

"However, the people must act to stop corrupt practices that are being carried out discreetly."

On the ACA, Dr Mahathir said it was the duty of the agency to detect and take action against civil servants and members of the public who take bribes.

He urged heads of departments to support the agency by ensuring that their officers cooperate with the ACA.