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Corruption

SMART PARTNERSHIP COULD BE USED TO FIGHT CORRUPTION

KUALA LUMPUR, July 31 (Bernama) -- The concept of smart partnership, highlighted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the third Langkawi International Dialogue 1997, could be developed to fight corruption in the developing countries, an international corruption watchdog group said today.

Transparency International (TI) Malaysia Chapter said that through smart partnership, corruption in the developing countries could be fought especially when it originated from the developed world.

Its Coordinator, Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim said European companies, for example were allowed to engage in transnational bribery and get tax deductions from their governments for payment of commissions to foreign governments in return for lucrative contracts.

"It is illegal to pay bribe in their own country but as long as it is not in their own backyard it does not matter," he said.

Tunku Abdul Aziz said this aspect was raised by Dr Mahathir when the controversial 1996 TI Corruption Perception Index (CPI) was released which ranked Malaysia at 26th place among 52 countries surveyed.

TI, taking note on what Dr Mahathir had said, is now developing a new index which focused on developed industrial nations to show that corruptions in the developing countries actually originated from the developed countries, he said.

The TI 1997 CPI would be released by the Berlin-based group at about 8pm local time today.

Tunku Abdul Aziz said the 1997 CPI made its appearance at a most significant time in the development of our national integrity system, a period characterised by vigorous and highly visible efforts on part of the government to ensure that corruption does not become a way of life in our society.

"We have some way to go before we can breathe a collective sigh of relief, but a genuine effort has been made by the Government as part of a strategy to mobilise public support by creating awareness of the massive damage corruption can do to our long term national interest and aspirations," he said.

Tunku Abdul Aziz said a high degree of public awareness was essential in developing and strengthening a national integrity system as it required whole-hearted support of the community working in close partnership with the government. --BERNAMA

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