

18/03/2000

Bank association, union view alleged leaks seriously

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The Association of Banks Malaysia today said it took a serious view of the alleged leakage of customers' information by pro-  
Opposition bank employees.

"Section 97 of the Secrecy Provision of the Banking & Financial Institution Act (Bafia) states clearly that no officer of any licenced financial institution shall review or publish to any person, any information or document whatsoever relating to the affairs or account of a customer.

"In this respect, the association has again emphasised to all its members to continue to comply fully with all provisions of Bafia at all times," ABM executive director Joanne Wong said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that some bank employees who were sympathetic to the Opposition had leaked confidential details of individual and Government financial transactions. The National Union of Bank Employees, while condemning the leaks as a "serious punishable misconduct", said withdrawing funds was too punitive a response.

"The actions of a few, overzealous, immature and irresponsible employees during the last election does not warrant such a drastic and punitive reciprocal action," NUBE secretary-general Gopala Krishnan G. said in a Press statement.

"As the country is just on the road to recovery with the bank mergers on the cards, such action may have serious consequences on the banking and financial industry in general, and in particular the bank(s) concerned." Meanwhile, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman called on the banking industry to maintain a high degree of professionalism to give confidence to depositors and investors.

"If not, it will erode public confidence and depositors will begin to withdraw their money.

"This will not bring any good to the bank employees at all," Ghani stressed.

(END)