

## **Anti-graft panel appeals to BN, Pakatan for more powers**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Aug 24, 2013**

**By Nigel Aw**

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has sought bi-partisan support from both BN and Pakatan Rakyat to increase its powers.

Speaking at a forum today, MACC chief Abu Kassim revealed that the graft buster had initiated lobbying efforts and met parties from both sides of the political divide.

"We had a dialogue with the government and opposition, and I am very proud that they were supportive of us.

"I need them to help us to amend the constitution and that will require two-thirds majority (in Parliament)," he said at the 7th Annual Malaysian Student Leaders Summit.

akbhar satar ti-m president with rafizi ramli and macc chief abu kassim Abu Kassim (far right) said he wanted two constitutional amendments which will allow the MACC to independently hire and fire and accord the MACC chief similar protection to judges.

He explained that the MACC needed to hire on its own and provide better pay as the commission needed to attract talents such as forensic accountants.

Abu Kassim gave an example of an accountant of 30 years experience who had chosen to work for MACC when he was previously drawing a RM1.5 million annual income.

"The Public Service Department was only willing to pay him RM15,000 and even then there were much difficulties, but he chose to serve the nation," said the MACC chief.

Also present at the forum was Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) president Akhbar Satar and Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli.

Rafizi later said that he was an accountant with 12 years experience and was prepared to offer his services to the MACC for free. "I don't just investigate cows," he quipped.

As for giving the MACC chief similar status to a judge, Abu Kassim said while he himself has yet to face any threats from the government, this was to ensure that the tenure of future MACC heads will be protected.

'Legislative improvements'

Abu Kassim said he was also hoping for legislative improvements to help MACC in its investigation and to secure convictions.

"For example, for now the court does not accept confessions in corruption cases, they want an independent witness.

"But corruption is normally one-to-one basis, where are we going to find another independent witness?" he said, adding that the courts in Singapore is less strict in this sense.

Asked later if the MACC will also be seeking prosecution powers, Abu Kassim said he would like to go ahead with current amendments first.

"Let's deal with the amendments first to make our work easier and if we cannot perform then, we will take the next step," he said.

He added that ultimately, whether MACC gets prosecution powers or not rests with the lawmakers from both sides of the parliamentary divide.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/239222>