

Fight graft for country's future, TI-M urges Najib
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Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) has urged Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's administration to urgently fight corruption for the sake of the country's future.

Arguing that the recent petrol price hike was misplaced, TI-M said all government officials should instead be made to declare their assets publicly, bipartisan dialogue must happen and leakages from government procurement activities should be plugged.

NONE"Without a strong political will to push the greater transparency and anti-corruption agenda, the future of this country may be uncertain," TI-M president Akhbar Satar (right) said in a press statement.

TI-M said that it agreed with suggestions from senior Umno leader and former finance minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah for ministers to declare their assets.

Going even further, it said that not only ministers but also senior civil servants and heads of departments and agencies who have authority over administrative and financial matters, should also be made to declare their assets publicly.

TI-M also said the time was ripe for Najib to seek out dialogue with the opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim.

"There is just too much politicking now; we need to close ranks as it will augur well for the nation and the rakyat... surely we do not want to drag this country's economy into the doldrums," the group said.

TI-M pointed that huge savings could be had if the government seriously tackles corruption as Malaysia's procurement contracts amount to RM201 billion per year. It agreed with DAP's Lim Guan Eng assessment that RM51 billion may be saved annually, even as a conservative figure, if corruption is curbed.

"There is also no doubt that corruption-related activities is proving to be the worst leakage in the current scheme of things," it said.

Lastly, the group also criticised the recent 20 sen per litre petrol and diesel price hike, saying that if the government tackled corruption, there was "no reason why

the government cannot continue to subsidise petrol and other important household goods”.

It added that subsidies cut could be a later economic option when the economy was put back on track.

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