

# Teach children to abhor corruption

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has firmly pledged to fight corruption, saying there must not be any more stealing of the country's wealth.

He was also quoted as saying that corruption, not the other races, is the real threat to the survival of the Malay community. He should have added that corruption is also a threat to all the other races and communities in our beloved nation.

But the fight against corruption is not the government's or the PM's alone. The civil service, private sector and civil society must also play their part. This is important because corrupt practices affect almost everybody. Corruption inhibits economic growth, affects

business operations, employment and investments and, in some cases, lowers morale.

Full transparency, especially in procurement and granting of contracts, and the publication of audit reports will lead to greater adherence to prudent practices. And the benefits will accrue to all citizens.

An important and effective way to fight corruption is to inculcate ethics and moral values, including abhorrence of corruption, among the young at school, beginning at the primary level. Teachers will have to be the children's role models when they are in school.

Children must be exposed to moral stories with valuable lessons. These could include accounts of the deeds of our forefathers who

gave selfless service to King and country.

It is true that the learning of childhood stays with children throughout their lives, so develop their moral compass when they are young and they will follow its direction for the rest of their lives.

Technology can also be used to clamp down on corruption. Whistleblowers, for example, should be given more channels of reporting, including through encrypted messages.

Granted, it is impossible to completely eradicate corrupt practices, but we can make an impact now. And we must.

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