

PM LAUNCHES NATIONAL ANTI-GRAFT STRATEGY

Anwar says bold leaders needed as scourge must not be taken lightly

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THE country needs powerful, dedicated and courageous leaders to combat graft as the scourge of corruption must not be taken lightly, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"You need strong legislation and laws to protect. And, more profoundly, you need clear political will and direction," he said.

The prime minister said this at the launch of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) 2024-2028.

NACS 2024-2028 emphasises the effectiveness of anti-graft efforts to improve governance and integrity in public service administration.

It outlines five core strategies in efforts to prevent corrupt practices in the country and is a continuation from the National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) 2019-2023.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali, and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki.

Anwar said the issue of corruption could not be viewed lightly, adding that apart from the MACC, other enforcement agencies must also play their part in combating graft.

In fact, he said, the nation as a whole must take part in the fight against corruption.

"When we launch this agenda, the pillar is still MACC. But it also involves other agencies, such as the Inland Revenue Board, the police, Immigration Department and Customs Department, and other agencies as well, to ensure that this country moves forward and is more determined to fight corruption.

"I have confidence in Azam (MACC chief) and the MACC fam-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the launch of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024-2028 in Putrajaya yesterday. Anwar says clear political will is crucial to tackling corruption. BERNAMA PIC

ily, who have been given the trust and support. Regardless of rank and position, they fight corruption so that the people get a clear message.

"This (corruption) cannot happen. We cannot allow civil servants and the authorities to feel that they have the right to amass wealth and carry out their administration based on the laws of the jungle," he added.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said Malaysia's second prime minister, the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, had warned about the dangers of corruption in the 1960s.

Corruption, he said, was among the "three Cs" faced by the nation at the time.

"They (the three Cs) were communism, communalism and corruption.

"Imagine, in 1961, 1962, Razak had already warned us. There were already leaders mired in corruption who had forgotten about the pain, blood, sweat and tears of those before them who had struggled."

The prime minister also said he was shocked to hear that the country lost billions a year due to leakages and corruption.

"(We can) eradicate poverty, build schools, hospitals, champion for the plight of the fishermen, farmers... everything can be solved if we can save this country from greed," he said.

The five key strategies outlined in the NACS are education, public accountability, voice, enforcement and incentives, with 60 sub-strategies to be implemented over five years.

It encompasses politicians, public administration, government procurement, law enforcement, legal and judicial institutions, the private sector and the public.

On Sunday, Azam said NACS was a government effort to develop a national strategy to combat corruption in line with Article 5 of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

Article 5 mandates that UN member nations must produce a document that would be the primary reference for anti-corruption initiatives at the national level.

Azam said NACP, which ended last year, was identified as one of the factors which had indirectly aided in the country's success in repairing its reputation in terms of the Corruption Perception Index ranking in 2019, where Malaysia climbed to the 51st spot from 61st in 2018.

Due to this factor, he added, NACS was developed with an emphasis on the five main strategies.

Azam said to ensure the success of NACS, a comprehensive monitoring mechanism would be established by MACC's National Governance Planning Division.

Monitoring and evaluation reports on NACS, he said, would be presented at the National Governance Special Cabinet Committee meeting chaired by the prime minister for endorsement before submission to the cabinet and Parliament.

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim arriving at the launch of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024-2028 yesterday. With him are Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission chief commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki (right), Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof (left) and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (second from left).