

HIGH PRAISE: US federal judge lauds country's efforts as well planned
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PUTRAJAYA: MALAYSIA is on the right track in fighting corruption with its well planned strategies and approaches.

United States federal judge Frank Montalvo believes that in order to prevent and deal with corruption and other crimes, every country needs to grow its own solution, besides adopting the general principles.

"For example, it has been suggested that some crimes should be included in every country's Penal Code in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

"From everything that I have seen, Malaysia is doing just that and is on the right track in fighting corruption," Montalvo, who was on a five-day working visit here since Sunday, said during a press conference at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters here yesterday.

It was Montalvo's first visit to Malaysia.

Montalvo took the opportunity to visit the Attorney-General's Chambers, apart from giving a talk to 28 judges who handled corruption cases in 14 courts in the country. He said corruption was an existing problem in every country.

"This is a problem faced by many other countries and the work and efforts poured in by numerous organisations against corruption is always a work in progress.

"Commitment and responsibility are essential in leading the fight against corruption and officers must constantly think of improving the approaches used to fight this crime."

Montalvo also said through his visit, he observed that Malaysian anti-corruption officers were very dedicated in looking at various areas, besides adopting effective approaches to combat graft practices.

"I am impressed with the professionalism of these officers and they are also very hardworking."

Asked who acted as the watchdog for corruption in his country, Montalvo said he had to file very strict financial disclosures annually.

"We have to file it with the Federal Government and it is a crime to lie or conceal information on that. For instance, when I travel, I have to report the things I have received other than normal hospitality accorded to me.

"As a judge who presides over cases, we must set a good example for the people."

From 1995 to 2003, Montalvo served as the 288th district court judge for the state of Texas before he was appointed by former president George W. Bush to the federal bench in 2003.

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