

NACP states loud and clear govt's stand on corruption - Dr Mahathir

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PUTRAJAYA, Jan 29 (Bernama) -- The National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) 2019-2023 is a loud and clear statement from the government on corruption, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said that now that the plan was out, those the government had booked and is going after for corruption will be punished and also warned that anyone caught for corruption in future will face even heavier punishment .

The plan, he said, was proof that action taken against offenders was not based on revenge or hatred.

"Action is being taken because the damage they caused to the country is very huge and cannot be allowed to go scot-free. Those contemplating corrupt activities like them also will not escape and the punishment will be even heavier," he said.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Cabinet ministers, Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Abu Bakar, and Governance, Integrity, Anti-Corruption Centre director-general Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed.

The NACP 2019-2023 outlines 22 strategies focusing on six key sectors. It contains 115 anti-corruption initiatives involving politics; procurement in the public sector; enforcement of laws; public sector administration; laws and the judiciary; and corporate governance.

The Plan which was drafted by GIACC with the cooperation of government agencies sets practical targets based on the initiatives to be taken by each government agency and the

private sector to combat corruption and integrity and governance issues in the next five years.

Dr Mahathir said the Plan comes as a reminder and warning to current and future leaders that Malaysia and its people will not tolerate corruption because it is abhorrent.

Dr Mahathir noted that the National Integrity Plan introduced in 2004, which focused on the culture of integrity in society, was not capable of checking the culture of corruption.

In fact, he said, corruption became worse after it was introduced so much so in the last few years Malaysia was labelled a kleptocratic state, something that was extremely shameful.

Kleptocracy described a government that was led by the corrupt and people who exploited the nation's wealth for their own personal interests, he said.

"This label was not given by me or the government led by me. It was spread by foreign media after the authorities in other countries found the past leader was involved in money laundering, corruption and cheating at a level that has never happened before," he said.

On this awareness, he said, the government could not just remind the people of the offences committed and their severe repercussions to the country but instead look forward to find ways to ensure the new government and future governments do not go down the same path.

Dr Mahathir also said that it was not enough to fault the past government and make it a reminder (on the scourge of corruption).

"Just having the intention not to engage in corruption and paying lip service will not do. We need various strategies, laws and "gates" to curb corruption and make it difficult for those

wanting to do it.

"And if they succeed in doing it, we must be capable of tracing the offence fast and after that throw the book at them," he added,

If some held the view that the current government was too focused on the misdeeds of the past one, Dr Mahathir explained that the NACP was a vision for the future which had to be faced by those in the administration now.

He said the plan was prepared via a process that took into consideration the aspirations and hopes of Malaysians in combating corruption.

It is based on empirical evidence from analyses, data on arrests made, latest audit reports, the pledges in the Pakatan Harapan manifesto (on fighting corruption) and reports from the Institutional Reforms Committee.

The Plan also considered views and feedback from all secretaries-general, heads of government departments and agencies while discussions were also held with various parties who could give inputs towards the effort (fighting corruption) , Dr Mahathir said.

"We hope with this plan, in the next five years we will be able to check the culture of corruption in the country.

"We know this cannot be achieved easily or fast. But we must lay the foundation to build a culture and put in place systems where good governance and integrity is a given," he added.

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