

Dr M: Corruption becoming culture

■ By Hamidah Atan

PUTRAJAYA, Wed. — Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned today that corruption was becoming a culture in Malaysia.

The former Prime Minister said corruption was almost at the “above the table” level, with a significant number being involved.

“Where are we now? We are slowly breaking through the ceiling. We are slowly emerging ‘above the table’, and when that occurs, I hope I won’t be around,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said there could be no turning back if corruption becomes rampant, “because everybody, from the bottom to the top, will be corrupt”.

“If we have better values, this will not happen,” he said after presenting the keynote address on “Social Re-engin-

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eering”, for a 10-part series of discourses at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here today.

He said this in response to a question from an Umno Youth member who sought his opinion on the level of corruption in Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir said political parties in the Government had to act without fear or favour against anyone involved in corruption, including “even the most prominent officials or persons”.

He said they had to act fast to fight corruption at all levels, and within themselves, or face a loss of credibility.

Dr Mahathir said the corrupt did not even hide that they were corrupt.

“I do not like to make comparisons with the past, but before you did not have to bribe anybody to get elected. Now, you must bribe before



WARNING ON CORRUPTION: Dr Mahathir stressing on the matter after presenting a keynote address on ‘Social Re-engineering’ at the Perdana Leadership Foundation yesterday. — NST picture by Hadzme Mohd Jaafar

you can get elected.”

On money politics in Umno, Dr Mahathir said: “I was told that there is a lot of money politics (in Umno). I

hope it is not true but I am inclined to believe it is. If this thing emerges above the table, you cannot stop it as by then, everybody will be in-

involved.”

He said if corruption became “institutionalised”, the cost of doing business would go up.

“You have to pay as everybody asks that you pay. This will retard growth and eventually, the country will suffer.”