

Speed up corruption trials, says PM

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Mokhzani accompanies Abdullah during the prime minister's visit to Mahathir. Behind Abdullah is IJN specialist Dr Sanjiv Joshi.

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wants the courts to expedite the hearing of corruption cases, no matter if they involve "anchovies or sharks".

He said there had been criticisms made by the people that such cases were being delayed by the courts.

"When such criticisms

are made ... it is actually made to the prime minister himself, [and] many say he is not serious in wanting to take action against corrupt people," he said at the launch of the state-level National Integrity Institute and National Integrity Day 2006 celebration at Putrajaya Convention Centre yesterday.

Abdullah said he would leave it to the discretion of the courts to look into the matter, but noted that

corruption cases were cases which involved public interest and "should be resolved as soon as possible".

"Justice delayed is justice denied. Any delay in hearing such cases can affect the government's efforts to eradicate corruption and enhance integrity," he said.

He said that like all other citizens, he urged the courts to expedite the hearing of corruption cases so that "not only is justice done, but

justice is seen to be done".

He noted that efforts to instil integrity in the people was a long-term effort.

The prime minister also commented on Malaysia's position in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, which showed it slip from 5.1 last year to 5.0 this year.

He said the figure was disappointing but questioned if the study reflected the actual situation in Malaysia.