

Education crucial to protect integrity as youth involvement in corruption reaches alarming levels

By **T.n. Alagesh** - December 15, 2024 @ 11:56pm



Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) deputy chief commissioner (prevention) Datuk Azmi Kamaruzaman (third line, centre) said 1,073 individuals have been charged in court while 575 youths were found guilty. - NSTP/MUHAMMAD DELIMA ATAN

KUANTAN: The involvement of youths in corrupt practices is serious with a total of 2,337 people aged between 16 and 40 have been detained for various corruption offences since 2019.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) deputy chief commissioner (prevention) Datuk Azmi Kamaruzaman said 1,073 individuals have been charged in court while 575 youths were found guilty.

"Based on the statistics of offence, youths were involved in corrupt practises such as accepting and giving bribes, making false claims, abusing their positions, money laundering and others.

"It gives an impression that corruption among youths is serious and has to be curbed to prevent normalisation of such practices," he said in his speech when closing the eastern zone Anti-Corruption Student Group (Amar) camp at Sultan Ahmad Shah Maritime Academy here today.

Azmi added that the MACC strives to take up an important role in preventing corruption and educating the community, especially youths to increase integrity and display hate towards corruption.

"We organise face-to-face programmes such as forums, conventions, round table discussions, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, talks, field trips and tours to increase community awareness.

"The Generation Z (Gen-Z) will have a big responsibility to play as previous studies show that the involvement of youths in corrupt practices has seen an increase.

"The young generation will notice the importance of integrity during student life or once entering the working environment," he added.

Eight-eight students from various universities and colleges in the east coast participated in the three-day programme at a resort here.

They were given lessons about corruption, promoting ethical behaviour, and the impacts of corruption through workshops, seminars, and interactive sessions.

Meanwhile, Azmi said the real test for Generation Z on issues of integrity will arrive in their working environment where they will be required to make important decisions.

"The future is challenging and Generation Z will go through it maybe upon securing employment when they might realise that something is not right.

"Open your eyes, so that you will be able to see all that is happening around us and make wise decisions," he said.

Azmi lauded Bank Pembangunan Malaysia Bhd (BPMB) for teaming up with MACC to organise the Amar camp as part of their efforts to combat corruption and raise awareness among university students.

"BPMB is the first financial institution to support this initiative with MACC and has picked students from higher learning institutions as their target group to spread awareness," he said.

Meanwhile, BPMB Independent non-executive Director Ts. Dr. Othman Abdullah said a study by Universiti Putra Malaysia in 2021 found that 14.3 percent of students had been offered bribes, and 2.5 percent admitted to accepting it.

"Although the data is not recent, it reminds us of the important role students play in overcoming this issue.

This prompted BPMB to shift our annual awareness programme from focusing on business partners to engaging university students to shape future leaders with integrity," he said.