

Five strategies to nurture a nation free of corruption

ANTI-CORRUPTION education is a cornerstone in the fight against corruption. It is imperative to instil values of integrity and abhorrence of such practices from a young age.

This should not be confined to schools, but must also extend to higher learning institutions, as graduates are future leaders who will shape the destiny of our nation, creating a culture of integrity and accountability free from corruption.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), Education Ministry and Higher Education Ministry have made strides in promoting anti-corruption education with five strategies:

Integrity-based personnel preparation: This involves the introduction of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Course (KIAR) in higher learning institutions.

KIAR started as a pilot project at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in February 2018. It has since expanded to other universities, including Kolej Universiti Islam Melaka in 2019, Universiti Putra Malaysia in 2020, and several campuses of Universiti Kuala



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Lumpur in 2021.

On April 19, 2021, the Special Cabinet Committee on Anti-Corruption chaired by the then prime minister agreed that KIAR was to be offered in all higher learning institutions (at the certificate, diploma and bachelor's degree levels) as an elective the same year, and as a compulsory course starting in 2023.

On May 20, 2024, the government agreed to have KIAR in all technical and vocational education and training institutions. There are 1,345 such institutions under the purview of 12 ministries.

Empowering students through the Anti-Corruption Student Force (Amar): This focuses on the establishment of Amar, a student club, in higher learning institu-

tions. Amar was initially known as the Anti-Corruption Secretariat.

Amar now has 117 chapters nationwide. They hold programmes such as "Walk Stop Talk: Six Hours Quarter Million Messages", which garnered 212,919 signatures in six hours and was recognised by the *Malaysia Book of Records* in 2018.

Other activities include anti-corruption student conventions, debates, and short video and poster design competitions.

Cultivating a culture of integrity in schools: This involves integrating anti-corruption elements into textbooks, providing early exposure to the significance of integrity and perils of corruption.

Textbooks with anti-corruption elements are used in Pendidikan Moral Standard 3, Bahasa Melayu Standard 4, Bahasa Melayu Standard 5, Pendidikan Moral (Melayu) Standard 6, Pendidikan Moral (Cina) Standard 6, Pendidikan Moral (Tamil) Standard 6, Pendidikan Islam Standard 6, Pendidikan Moral Form 1, and Pendidikan Moral Form 2. Anti-corruption elements are also included in the Civic Education Ex-

emplar module for primary and secondary schools.

Instilling anti-corruption values through the Anti-Corruption Warriors (WAR) programme: The WAR programme is designed to instil a strong aversion to corruption in primary and secondary school students.

Conducted in collaboration with teachers and parents at 174 schools nationwide, the programme emphasises honesty, trust and respect for others' rights.

During the pandemic, MACC and the Education Ministry collaborated to organise online WAR competitions.

Practical application of integrity with the Honest Shop project: Honest shops in schools encourages students to practise honesty and integrity in a tangible manner.

By allowing students to buy items from the shops and make payments independently without being monitored, this project reinforces the values of honesty, trust and respect for others' rights.

The Honest Shop was initiated in five schools in Putrajaya in 2020. The following year, 20 more

schools set up the shop.

In October 2023, the Sabah chief minister launched Honest shops in 20 schools, jointly organised by Petra Energy Bhd, Sabah MACC and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Association.

The building of a corruption-free nation demands a sustained commitment to instilling integrity and anti-corruption values in society.

Collaboration among multiple agencies, coupled with exemplary leadership, is essential to ensure the success of such initiatives.

Educators play a pivotal role in shaping the moral compass of our youth. Efforts to enhance their understanding of corruption and integrate anti-corruption elements into their teaching practices are important to cultivate a morally upright and ethically conscious society.

The collective efforts to nurture a generation of individuals guided by principles of integrity and intolerance to corruption are crucial steps towards realising a corruption-free nation.

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