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## People must start giving a damn about corruption

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## COLUMNS

NAN

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I refer to the *malaysiakini* report [PM: No action against Johari for now](#). First, the ACA chief was accused of graft and abuse of power. Now we have a deputy minister in charge of internal security being accused of allegedly receiving RM5 million to release three big underworld 'tai ko' from their detention.

One would take little comfort in our prime minister's statement that those who are not corrupt should not feel afraid if abuse of power for monetary rewards by our top guns prove to be true. It seems that corruption and abuse of power by those holding the fort are getting from bad to worse. What used to be done 'under the counter' is now being done openly 'above the counter' by those who hold top positions in this country.

Heaven knows how bad corruption really is in this country. For the corrupt souls to do it openly doesn't speak well of their moral and religious values of society today. As long as you are not caught, it seems it is all right to obtain ill-gotten gains. If your misdeeds are however exposed, use the Almighty's name to say that you are innocent.

Better still, be like the deputy minister who claimed that the police force was inefficient in their work and had not followed procedures. Washing dirty linen in public is a good way to distract the people's attention.

Corruption and abuse of power happen because society chooses to close one eye to the misdeeds of the few who abuse their power for short-terms gains. How can these corrupt people can use their ill-gotten money to feed their families and pay their bills without a touch of a guilty conscience is something the common people cannot fathom.

Needless to say, these powerful crooks will not be held accountable for their misdeeds and somehow the powers-that-be will protect them from the long arm of the law. We have with us some cabinet members who were involved in corrupt practices and abuse of power but still remain in office.

From the recent survey by Transparency International, the perception is that uniformed bodies like the police force and the customs department are heavily tainted by corruptions and to stop this rot will be an uphill task as long as there is no political will by the present regime.

One reads with horror, how other Third World countries like Zimbabwe are going down the gutter due to corruption and abuse of power by the ruling elite. If we are not careful and stop corruption now in its tracks, we will be heading the same direction in time to

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come.

In Western countries where democracy thrives, the governments of the day will fall if their hands are tainted by corruption scandals. The opposite is happening here where the press has highlighted scandal after scandal but the same government of the day continues to rule us.

We need leaders with a good character to guide our ship to good harbour but as long as the common people don't give a damn about good governance and accountability, the politicians of the day and their cohorts will have a field day making their hay while the sun shines. Sad but true.

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