

MACC keeping a close eye on govt servants, says Azam

KOTA KINABALU: Graftbusters are closely monitoring government servants suspected of receiving bribes from illegal businesses, said Tan Sri Azam Baki.

The chief commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said this during an event here yesterday, emphasising the focus is now nationwide.

"I want to make it clear that we are not only monitoring Sabah, but also other major states," he said.

He said this in response to questions about possible involvement of government bodies or local authorities in such activities in Sabah.

This follows the recent detention of a senior officer from Kuala Lumpur City Hall last week, as part of an investigation into allegations of monthly bribes collected from illegal businesses in Kuala Lumpur.

The officer is suspected of receiving monthly payments ranging from RM100,000 to RM500,000 from syndicates operating unlicensed massage parlours, entertainment outlets and other illegal establishments.

In addition to him, two other civil servants and a former government servant were detained in connection with the case.

Azam stated that the MACC does not anticipate further arrests and is conducting a comprehensive investigation into the suspects.

He added that the funds under investigation are believed to have been obtained through abuse of power over several years.

The chief commissioner also said that MACC is actively monitoring all ports across the country to combat leakages resulting from false declaration of goods for tax evasion.

He noted that such activities often occur due to corruption and abuse of power, and the MACC is collaborating closely with the Customs Department to address this issue.

Azam stressed the importance of reclaiming public funds and ensuring proper tax collection, stating that "we will utilise existing laws such as the MACC Act 2009 to recover the funds".

For instance, Azam cited a recent case in Port Klang in which smugglers attempted to smuggle prohibited goods such as pork and high-value electrical appliances.

Azam said he would disclose further details later and assured that the authorities would apprehend wrongdoers.