

SENSITIVE POSITIONS

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MMEA monitoring officers to prevent corruption

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) is taking measures, including monitoring officers holding sensitive positions and those with high debts, to prevent corruption.

Its director-general, Admiral Datuk Seri Zulkifli Abu Bakar, said putting these officers under watch could prevent officers and staff from getting involved in graft.

“We are taking efforts to know our men better and monitor

those with the potential of being involved in corruption, particularly those holding sensitive positions and those with high debts.

“We will monitor them and transfer them to other departments, if necessary. We will also

conduct workshops and talks to remind them to uphold their integrity,” he told the *New Straits Times* recently in conjunction with MMEA’s 13th anniversary on Feb 15.

Zulkifli said the agency had cooperated with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and would continue the collaboration to ensure MMEA was free from corruption.

“We encourage our officers and staff to channel information to MACC if they know

of corruption taking place. It is also crucial to identify and arrest the giver, as corruption will not be eradicated if we overlook those enticing others with gratification.”

He said MMEA expected fewer invasion from Vietnamese fish-



Admiral Datuk Seri Zulkifli Abu Bakar



Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency officers seizing fish illegally caught by Vietnamese fisherman off Tanjung Sedili in Kota Tinggi, Johor, in 2016. FILE PIC

ing vessels this year following the issuance of a “yellow card” by the European Union to their home country.

He said only one Vietnamese fishing vessel was detained by the agency in Bintulu waters for encroachment up to last month.

“EU issued the card in September as Vietnam had violated the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing issue. Vietnam has

six months to rectify the situation. If it fails to follow the instruction and continues to allow its vessels to illegally fish, it will be banned from exporting marine products to EU.”

Last year, MMEA recorded 70 cases of invasion involving Vietnamese fishing boats, and 59 cases involving Malaysian boats operated by Vietnamese crews.

Since its inception in 2005,

MMEA had reduced the maritime crimes index from 48.08 per cent in 2006 to three per cent last year.

The agency handled more than 1,007 cases involving illegal foreign workers with the arrest of 6,720 people. It has also collected about RM307 million from fines, disposal of fishing vessels, compounds and fish auctions between 2006 and last year.