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Prepare staff to fight white-collar crime, firms told

■ By Arman Ahmad
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KUALA LUMPUR: Business houses have been urged to better train their staff on economic crime to prevent it from becoming more rampant.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung said yesterday that companies could send their staff for courses on commercial crime which was getting more sophisticated.

Chor said while corruption in government agencies was often highlighted in the media, corruption in the private sector was seldom brought to public knowledge as companies feared the adverse publicity would affect their reputation.

Chor was speaking after opening a conference on economic crime here yesterday on behalf of Home Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

In Syed Hamid's speech, read by Chor, the minister said Malaysians were becoming more aware of commercial crime.

The director of HELP University College's Centre for Fraud Management, Akhbar Satar, said the number of fraud and corruption cases reported had grown dramatically.

"Experience shows that the biggest victims of economic crime are organisations run by professionals who thought it could never happen to them.

"Some examples are the Enron scandal that brought

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Datuk Chor Chee Heung
Deputy Home Minister



about the collapse of Arthur Andersen, one of the largest accounting firms in the world, and the Societe General case in France earlier this year," he said.

The two-day conference, jointly organised by the Centre for Fraud Management and the Economic Crime Institute at Utica College, United States, is supported by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, Malaysia.

HELP University College has been organising courses on white-collar crime for the past two years.

Akhbar said the bulk of those who attended the courses were business executives.

"Many banks have now created departments to conduct their own investigations into things like credit card fraud."

HELP president Datuk Dr Paul Chan said the Centre for Fraud Management would offer a master's of science in economic crime management as well as short training courses in related areas.

"We will work closely with leading educational institutions such as Utica College, and other professional bodies and universities like the University of Teesside, United Kingdom," said Chan.

The *New Straits Times* and *Berita Harian* are the official media for the conference.