

**M'sia slides down graft index, worst in 10 years**  
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**by Nigel Aw**

The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranking for Malaysia has dipped from 56th place last year to 60th this year, the worst in 10 years, according to Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M).

Speaking during the release of the findings in Subang Jaya this morning, TI-M deputy president Mohamad Ali Hasan said Malaysia's score of 4.3 has also suffered its third consecutive fall since 2009.

While the dip in the score has been marginal, at 0.1 points each year, Mohamad Ali said this was still a cause for concern because the government has embarked on several anti-corruption efforts.

"Why should it drop? The government has held several (anti-corruption) programmes. The perception is that these actions are not effective," he said.

In 2003, Malaysia was ranked 37 in the survey covering 146 countries. For 2010, the survey involved 178 countries.

The CPI ranking is a gauge of perceived corruption in the public sector, determined by business leaders, expert assessments and opinion surveys.

"Sixty percent of the survey is from foreigners and 40 percent is from the local people, so what kind of message are we sending to foreign investors?" asked TI-M secretary-general Josie M Fernandez.

Of the 183 countries ranked this year, Malaysia is one rank ahead of Cuba, Latvia and Turkey, but is placed behind the Czech Republic, Namibia and Saudi Arabia.

Third among Asean countries

Malaysia is ranked third among the Asean countries, with Singapore dominating the list at a score of 9.2 followed by Brunei at 5.2, Malaysia at 4.3, Thailand at 3.4 and Indonesia at 3.0.

However, Josie (on right in picture) warned that if no effort is made to arrest the current slide, Indonesia, which has been making marked improvements, may well surpass Malaysia in the coming years.

"Indonesia has shown the political will to tackle corruption. To date, it has put almost 40 MPs in prison," she said.

Another result released by TI-M is the Corruption Barometer, a public opinion survey that assesses the general public's perception and experience of corruption.

The survey of 1,000 respondents showed that public perception on the effectiveness of the Malaysian government in combating corruption had improved slightly, from 48 percent last year to 49 percent.

However, the figure of those who perceived it as ineffective also increased, from 20 percent last year to 25 percent.

'Police and political parties most corrupt'

The research also found that the police and political parties were seen as the most corrupt institutions in the country, with most Malaysians believing that corruption levels would remain the same in the next three years.

However, the number of respondents who have given out bribe in the last three years has dropped, from

nine percent to 1.2 percent in the last 12 months.

"We do not have a definite answer, but it could mean that the government's efforts to fight petty corruption in the police force has been effective," said TI-M exco member Ngoon Chiu Ng.

Despite this, Mohammad Ali (left in photo above) noted, the CPI has continued to decline as "elements of state" that facilitated 'grand corruption' were still prevalent.

The research concludes that despite various efforts of the government, there has been no significant change in corruption level in the last 12 months.

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