

Malaysia's graft index slightly down from last year
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KUALA LUMPUR - Malaysia's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2010 is slightly lower than last year, ranking it 56 out of 178 countries.

However, the difference in the Transparency International (TI) 2010 CPI score for Malaysia between last year's 4.5 and this year's 4.4 was insignificant and not tantamount to a decline, said its president Paul Low, *The Star* reported.

The score, which indicates "10" as no corruption and "0" as extremely corrupt, fell short of the 4.9 target the Government had announced in January. It aimed to achieve this by making "integrity" part of its Key Productivity Index in the National Key Results Area (NKRA).

"The efforts by the Government through the NKRA have not shown any results because perception takes a while to change," Low told a press conference held here Tuesday to announce the 2010 CPI.

However, the score also indicated a halt to a further downward slide, possibly due to the Government's acceptance of the CPI this year - a recognition that there was a need to deal with corruption, said Low.

Low said people's perception would not change until they perceived that the Government's efforts brought radical change to people's lives.

"We hope more complete and concrete measures will be taken by the Government to improve on the perception," he was quoted as saying by *The Star*.

The 2010 CPI revealed that Denmark, New Zealand and Singapore tied for first place with scores of 9.3 while Somalia came in last with a score of 1.1 and Afghanistan and Myanmar second last with a score of 1.4.

Among Asean countries, Malaysia came in third after Singapore and Brunei.

Malaysia's CPI score began to decline from 2008 when it dropped from 5.1 to 4.5 last year.

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