

# Strong support for reforming public agencies

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The public and the corporate sector are largely supportive of measures to reform the system of governance, according to a Malaysian Transparency Perception Survey.

The survey says public support for likely measures for reform is high, signifying a sense of hopefulness and trust in the leaders and the government to improve the level of integrity in its agencies.

The findings of the survey also indicate a reasonable level of public and corporate sector awareness about the changes needed to bring about durable improvements in the government structure.

The survey was conducted by the Merdeka Centre on behalf of Transparency International Malaysia (TIM), which polled 1,025 members of the public and 411 members of the corporate sector.

Some of its findings:

- 90 per cent of the corporate sector and 88 per cent of the public supported moves to blacklist companies in breach of government contracts;

- 92 per cent of the public and 76 per cent of the corporate sector supported the formation of an ombudsman body;

- 95 per cent of the public and 82 per cent of the corporate sector supported legislation to protect whistle-blowers in corruption cases; and,

- 78 per cent of the public and 76 per cent of the corporate sector supported having the Anti-Corruption Agency report to parliament.

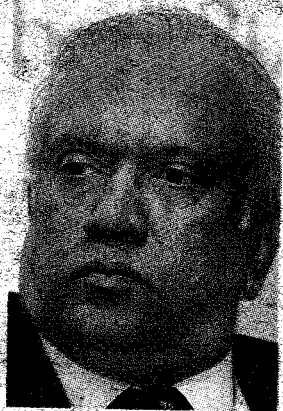
TIM president Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam said there was a lot more work to be done to improve the level of transparency in the civil service and public life.

"People believe the problem is acute and serious. More people need to be apprehended for corruption," he said after the launch of the survey by Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee chairman Datuk Shahrir Samad yesterday.

The five government agencies with perceived lowest integrity and transparency among the public are the police (56 per cent), Road Trans-

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President of Transparency  
International Malaysia*



PERCEIVED LOWEST INTEGRITY	
ACCORDING TO CORPORATE SECTOR	ACCORDING TO THE PUBLIC
Police (59%)	Police (56%)
Political Parties (52%)	Road Transport Department (25%)
Road Transport Department (35%)	Customs and Excise (19%)
Customs and Excise (34%)	Public Works (7%)
Local Government Agencies (23%)	Land Office (6%)
Land Office (21%)	

port Department (25 per cent), Customs and Excise (19 per cent), Public Works (7 per cent) and Land Office (6 per cent).

Six agencies perceived as having the lowest integrity and transparency according to the corporate sector are the Police (59 per cent), political parties (52 per cent), Road Transport Department (35 per cent), Customs and Excise (34 per cent), local government agencies (23 per cent) and Land Office (21 per cent).

In the private sector, the building and construction industry was seen to have the lowest level of integrity by both the public and corporate sector respondents.

The public gave health services the highest level of integrity (15.4 per cent), followed by educational institutions (13.3 per cent) and National Registration Department (2.6 per cent).

Among the corporate sector

respondents, health services ranked the highest (50 per cent) followed by legal (32 per cent) and the judiciary (31 per cent).

Commenting on the survey findings, Shahrir said if the problems that affected the civil service were addressed, half the problems of corruption could be overcome.

"Take, for example, the police ... as a service, it has been neglected. We should not just talk about their salaries but should look at other aspects of their service as well."

Touching on calls to have the ACA report directly to parliament, Shahrir said the time was not right as parliament itself did not regulate its own affairs.

"It is flattering and sounds good that the ACA reports to parliament but we (MPs) are not involved in the management and decision making of parliament," he said.

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