

Anti-corruption fight to score well under GTP 2.0
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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's standing as a nation that does not tolerate corruption is expected to soar when the new measures to fight graft under the second phase of the Government Transformation Programme are enforced.

The country's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) fell 4.4 points in 2010 to 4.3 in 2011, but the score rose 4.9 in 2012.

"This indicates the start of a possible upward trend that will continue this year," said Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) anti-corruption director Ravindran Devaganam.

He said the measures under GTP 2.0, from now till 2015, can help to further improve Malaysia's score in the global CPI.

Under GTP 1.0, which started in 2010, the Government had used the CPI, which surveys business people and experts, and the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB), which surveys public opinion on corruption in Malaysia as official benchmarks to measure the country's anti-graft performance.

Both indices are managed by Transparency International, the global civil organisation leading the fight against corruption.

While Malaysia's CPI score fell in 2011, the country's GCB score showed a slight increase from 48% (in 2010) to 49%, which Ravindran said was a source of optimism.

"Many of the measures introduced under GTP 1.0 are gaining traction, which can further help to improve Malaysia's performance in its anti-graft fight," he said, citing as an example the setting up of 14 specialised Corruption Courts to fast-track and reduce backlog.

Last year the courts processed 404 cases, of which 258 were successfully completed.

Ravindran said 1,124 people convicted of corruption, including high-profile personalities, have been listed in a publicly-accessible online list since 2010.

He said the US State Department uses the portal to vet visa applications by Malaysians, with those listed in the database denied entry.

Several Asian countries are in the process of linking their visa application systems to the online database.

Meanwhile, he added, the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 has resulted in the authorities offering various types of assistance, including witness protection, to 96 individuals.

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