



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL – MALAYSIA
(MALAYSIAN SOCIETY FOR TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY (ROS: 1649))

*TI-Malaysia promotes good governance, integrity and transparency in Malaysia
through advocacy, education, information and research*

26th Sep 2007 Press Release by Tan Sri Dr Ramon Navaratnam, President of Transparency International Malaysia
The Corruption Perceptions Index 2007 – Has Malaysia reached a Turning Point?

Malaysia moved up by one place in this year's Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2007 ending a 5 year downward spiral in the rankings from 33rd place in 2002, 37th in 2003, 39th in 2004, 39th in 2005 and 44th in 2006. We are ranked at the 43rd place but with minimal improvement in the score, from 5.0 to 5.1.

The inclusion of 16 new countries to the list of countries surveyed this year does mitigate somewhat Malaysia's performance in holding her own and with some improvement.

Hence this is a small improvement – but it must be sustained. Transparency International Malaysia urges the Government of Malaysia to step up the fight against corruption which is perceived to be a serious concern, especially among the public, officials and politicians. Malaysia needs to achieve a much higher level of transparency, integrity and good governance.

Corruption is a key threat to the rule of law and the long-term sustainability of Malaysia's economic and social progress. Corruption will undermine income distribution and income equity. It can also worsen poverty. The perception that corruption is prevalent among the nation's political and business elite is widespread. The following key points should be given due attention to improve Malaysia's ranking so that we are on par with the best in the world in these criteria.

Malaysia should pay particular attention to Government Procurement especially for large projects as the perception on the integrity of the execution of these projects can impact on public perception significantly. The awarding of huge infrastructure development projects to selected business entities without open and competitive tender and giving special licenses to certain groups does not help to improve the perception of its efforts towards greater transparency.

The numerous incidents of corruption, malpractices and mismanagement of public funds are also routinely highlighted in the Auditor General's yearly reports. Many mega projects are mismanaged and are ultimately bailed out by government using public funds.

As part of the process of greater transparency, judicial appointments should be made by an independent commission.

The Anti-Corruption Agency must be established as an independent statutory body to ensure that it will act firmly and fairly without fear or favor.

Public officials and legislators should be required to declare their assets publicly, and whistle-blowers should be given appropriate protection.

Malaysia should also ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption expeditiously. Government should also urgently review the Official Secrets Act and introduce "Freedom of Information" legislation as requisite measures to bring about a more transparent and accountable society.

As a responsible movement that is affiliated to a reputable international non-government organization, TI-Malaysia strongly supports the Prime Minister's stated objective of bringing about higher standards of transparency and accountability in Malaysia.

Transparency International - Malaysian Chapter

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