



Transparency International India

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the coalition against corruption

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PRESS RELEASE

INDIA: ALARMING PUBLIC PERCEPTION ABOUT CORRUPTION

The 2005 *Global Corruption Barometer*, based on a Gallup poll conducted on behalf of Transparency International for International Anti-Corruption Day 2005, reveals widespread concern about corruption around the globe.

Global/Regional Perspectives (Asia)

- ❖ While people in the Philippines and India express strong concerns about future levels of corruption in their country, with approximately 60 percent believing the situation will get a lot worse, Indonesians are even more optimistic than last year, with 63 percent expecting significant improvement.
- ❖ Looking to prospects for the next three years, the picture is somewhat less downbeat. India, besides Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Philippines, is among the five most pessimistic countries.

An Indian View of Corruption

Close to 55,000 people in 69 countries were polled between May and October 2005 to assess their views on corruption. Among them, 1,063 were from India. Poll's main findings with regard to India are as follows –

- ❖ 54% Indians believe that corruption affects spheres of their life to some extent and 25% to a large extent.
- ❖ 40% people believe that corruption affects business environment to some extent and 42% to a large extent.
- ❖ 28% people believe that corruption affects political life to some extent and 56% to a large extent.
- ❖ 42% people believe that the level of corruption in this country has changed a lot in the past 3 years.
- ❖ 57% expect the level of corruption to change a lot in the next 3 years.
- ❖ Sector-wise, 99% people perceive that the Police is affected by corruption, 98% Political Parties, 97% Legal system, and 94% utilities like telephone, electricity, water, etc. and Medical Services. The least corrupt Departments are perceived to be Military (58%) and Media (24%). Sector-wise data is as follows :

Sector	Not at All Corrupt	Some Corrupt	Moderately Corrupt	Extremely Corrupt
Customs	09	21	27	43
Education System	12	31	27	30
Legal system/ Judiciary	03	19	22	56
Medical Services	06	31	26	37
Police	01	06	14	79



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Sector	Not at All Corrupt	Some Corrupt	Moderately Corrupt	Extremely Corrupt
Political Parties	02	04	13	81
Parliament/ Legislature	08	14	22	56
Registry and Permit Services	12	27	25	43
Utilities (telephone, electricity, water, etc)	06	33	27	34
Tax Revenue	10	32	24	34
Business/ Private Sector	13	37	25	25
Media	24	50	11	15
Military	42	45	08	05
NGOs	20	48	18	14
Religious Bodies	21	46	17	16

Sectors Rife with Corruption: Once Again, Politics Tops the List

- ❖ On a score of 1 to 5 (1 meaning not at all corrupt, 5 meaning extremely corrupt), people perceive Political Parties and Police, with a score of 4.7, are the most corrupt. These are followed by Parliament/Legislature (4.4), Legal System/Judiciary (4.3), Customs (4.1), Registry/Permit Services (4.0), Education, Medical Services and Tax Revenue (3.8 each). With a score of 2.1, Military is perceived to be least corrupt among the 15 services studied. Sector-wise scores are as follows :

Sector	Score
Customs	4.1
Education System	3.8
Legal system/ Judiciary	4.3
Medical Services	3.8
Police	4.7
Political Parties	4.7
Parliament/ Legislature	4.4
Registry and Permit Services	4.0
Utilities (telephone, electricity, water, etc)	3.7
Tax Revenue	3.8
Business/ Private Sector	3.4
Media	2.7
Military	2.1
NGOs	3.0
Religious Bodies	2.9

Personal Experiences of Bribery

The *Barometer* indicates that 12% of the Indian respondents reported that someone living in their household paid a bribe in the past 12 months. In fact, corruption's impact on personal and family life is most dramatic on poor households. In addition, citizens in poor income countries tend to pay a significantly larger percentage of their income in bribes than in higher income countries.



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How Much is Spent on Bribes ?

- ❖ The average amount of money paid in bribes by a household in India in the past 12 months was \$102. (Rs. 4,600 approx.)
- ❖ 70% of the respondents reported that the bribe was directly asked for.

Why Do People Pay Bribes?

Bribery is usually a hidden or tacit transaction. An illegal payment is required to obtain a free service, or speed up delivery of a required service, such as a business permit or license, or to resolve a problem, even when a bribe is not explicitly demanded.

In case of India, 26% of the respondents reported that the bribe was offered to avoid a problem with the authorities; and 17% reported that the bribe was offered to receive a service to which they were entitled. Further, a majority of respondents in India, who paid bribe, revealed that they did so because the money was directly demanded from them.

The above findings are similar to those reported in our recently released 'India Corruption Study'

Why Measure Public Opinion on Corruption?

This survey lays a foundation for action by governments, international institutions, civil society and individuals. Knowledge of how people experience and perceive corruption is vital for the design of anti-corruption measures. In identifying the sectors of society most affected by corruption, Transparency International's *Global Corruption Barometer* 2005 can be a catalyst for reform. People's perceptions of the prevalence of corruption over time can also be an important indicator of the gravity and change in corruption problem. Many sectors are rife with corruption. Once again, politics tops the list among problem areas crying for government's anti-corruption policies and initiatives.

Considerable progress has been made in joint international actions such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), adopted in 2003 on International Anti-Corruption Day, 9 December, by the United Nations General Assembly, signed by 134 countries and to date, ratified by 36. It will come into force on 14 December 2005. These nations will now be benefited from the Convention's provisions to help retrieve assets stolen by dictators and other public officials, prevent money laundering, pursue corrupt foreign companies and individuals, prohibit bribery of foreign public officials, and enhance accounting and auditing standards in the private sector. Experience of other anti-corruption Conventions shows that without a rigorous monitoring mechanism the UNCAC will fail to make a dent on corruption levels.

"Complacency is corruption's best friend," said David Nussbaum, Chief Executive of Transparency International. "Signing the document and taking part in the photo opportunity is not enough. Leaders must now complete the ratification process and focus on implementation."

(Dr. S K Agarwal)
Vice Chairman TI India