

## Singapore does well in global corruption survey but...

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The Republic has done relatively well in the latest annual bellwether survey on anti-corruption by global civil society organisation Transparency International but some results of the survey, which was conducted online here, raised eyebrows among those whom MediaCorp contacted.

The 2010 Global Corruption Barometer - a public opinion survey done in 86 countries - found that overall, Singapore was placed in the second-best tier of countries when it came to prevalence of petty bribery.

Just nine per cent of those polled here said they had experienced such incidents.

But when asked to assess government action against corruption, 31 per cent of the 1,000 respondents here said these actions were ineffective, 40 per cent were undecided and 29 per cent said they were effective.

Commenting on the survey, Institute of Policy Studies senior research fellow Gillian Koh noted that citizens in some Western developed countries had a higher belief in the effectiveness of their governments' actions.

"While we do read about cases being prosecuted, perhaps the public might benefit from having more information on how the cases were uncovered in the first place," she said.

When contacted, GPC deputy chairman (Home Affairs and Law) Hri Kumar Nair reiterated that the majority of Singaporeans do think that government actions against corruption are successful and that the online survey may not paint an accurate picture.

Among 11 institutions picked for the poll, the media here were perceived to be the most affected by corruption.

But Singapore Management University law lecturer Eugene Tan said he felt that the difference in scores between institutions was too small to be meaningful and that the poll did not explain why the media was ranked lower.

GPC deputy chairman (Information, Communications and the Arts) Baey Yam Keng added: "The online survey might have attracted certain profiles, perhaps people who do not rely on the mainstream media (for news) ... that could be something when digesting this information."

## ■ GLOBAL CORRUPTION HAS WORSENER: TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

A survey by Transparency International (TI) has shown that, around the world, people believe that corruption has worsened over the past three years.

The survey, which had more than 91,000 respondents from 86 countries and territories, found a quarter saying they paid bribes to institutions — the police being the most frequent recipient.

According to the survey, more than 20 countries report significantly more bribery than when asked in 2006.

Views on corruption trends are

most negative in North America and Europe, where 73 per cent and 67 per cent respectively think that corruption has increased over the past three years.

However, only 5 per cent in European Union and North American countries report paying bribes, while more than 50 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa say they have.

In particular, the public's faith in political parties has been sharply eroded during the financial crisis, with four out of five people saying that they are

"corrupt or extremely corrupt", up from 69 per cent last year.

A breakdown of the TI figures showed that trust in political parties had markedly declined in countries such as Britain and the United States, the two countries seen to be at the heart of the Anglo-Saxon capitalist model.

Although the public's perception of politicians is suffering, confidence in the judiciary has improved, TI said. While 49 per cent believed judges were corrupt last year, the figure fell to 43 per cent this year, the report showed. **AGENCIES**