

## **Minister K Shanmugam commends public confidence in S'pore police; MHA spent S\$258 million above budget for publicity last year but gives no clarification**

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Law and Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam on Saturday (27 Mar) commended the public confidence in the Singapore Police Force (SPF), saying that the police has gained a level of trust that “many police forces around the world cannot even consider as a possibility”.

Earlier on Wednesday (24 Mar), the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) released its cross-national study of public attitudes and values which found that about 87 per cent of people polled in Singapore said they were confident, or very confident, with the SPF.

The study, which is part of the global World Values Survey, was conducted by Dr Mathew Mathews, Dr Teo Kay Key, Melvin Tay and Alicia Wang.

It had involved around 80 countries and 130,000 respondents, with about 2,012 Singapore citizens and permanent residents aged 21 and above have been surveyed, as reported by TODAY.

According to the study, the Singapore Government has garnered about 81.5 per cent of public confidence, higher than Switzerland (66.9 per cent), Hong Kong (55.2 per cent), Taiwan (53.1 per cent) and South Korea (51.3 per cent).

The Government of China was ranked the highest with 94.9 per cent.

It found that about 87 per cent of people polled were confident with the SPF, and 83.3 per cent were confident with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

IPS also revealed that 36 per cent of Singapore residents polled said they were confident that there were zero people in state institutions who are involved in corruption.

It added that the public confidence in the Singapore Parliament has declined from 75.4 per cent in 2012 to 72.7 per cent last year, while the Courts have garnered 82.3 per cent of public confidence.

Citing the IPS' study, Mr Shanmugam took to his Facebook on Saturday to commend the high level of public confidence in the SPF.

“MHA/Police surveys regularly show that 90% of our people trust our police force. Singapore also recently topped the Gallup 2020 Global Law and Order list, for the sixth year in a row.

“We are very fortunate to enjoy this level of trust, a level that many police forces around the world cannot even consider as a possibility,” he wrote.

## **MHA spent S\$332.9 million on public relations in the financial year 2020**

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) spent a total of S\$6.87 billion for the last financial year, an increase of S\$191.63 million over the S\$6.68 billion of actual expenditure in 2019, according to the Revenue and Expenditure Estimates released by the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

It was stated that the MHA's revised operating expenditure for the financial year 2020 amounted to S\$6.06 billion, higher than the actual FY2019 operating expenditure of S\$5.7 billion.

Of the S\$6.06 billion, the Ministry spent S\$332.9 million on international and public relations last year, an overbudget of S\$258.1 million over its earlier estimate of S\$74.8 million.

However, the MHA only noted that the increase in its operating expenditure for the financial year 2020 was due to "additional expenditure for COVID-19 operations", without providing further details on the additional expenditure.

In terms of the development expenditure, the Ministry had allocated a total of S\$804.10 million last year, which is lower than its earlier estimate of S\$814.27 million.