



NEWSLETTER



A Nation Without Corruption, A Society with Integrity

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all members and Ramadan Kareem to all our muslim brothers and sisters. The year 2024 will remain a challenging year for our movement due to the ongoing challenges related to political stability, commitment to reforms by the Madani government and the non-ending racial and religious tensions created by certain groups.



We released the CPI results for the year 2023 where the CPI scores rebounded to 50 points from 47 in 2022 and Malaysia's ranking rose from 61 in 2022 to 57 in 2023. However, on the same day when the CPI results were released, news broke out that the former Prime Minister Najib Razak will be given partial pardon and this was confirmed a week later. How is this news going to be perceived by business experts and investors and its impact on the CPI 2024, remains to be seen.

As our chapter is a member of two APPGs (All Party Parliamentary Group) we will continue to engage through the PSSCs (Parliamentary Special Select Committees) and other stakeholders on institutional reforms. Through the APPG eight (8) institutional reforms have been proposed but none of them have been tabled in parliament yet.

However, from our engagement with several MPs (Member of Parliament) we get the impression that the civil servants in several agencies and ministries are also an obstacle. They do not buy in on the reform agenda of the government. This is another factor besides the political will for the slow progress of the reforms. Perhaps at some point the Prime Minister must take some decisive and drastic action.

As for our activities I am pleased to announce that we have received a new funding from Waverly Foundation where our chapter and the secretariat in Berlin will be involved together in identifying corruption-related governance issues within the nascent Voluntary Carbon Market in Malaysia.

Other ongoing programmes are related to advocacy and training on Corporate Liability for Sarawak state's GLCs and the Collective Action program with the state government of Terengganu. TI-Malaysia "will also be holding a joint forum with the European Delegation in Malaysia called the 'Interfaith Dialogue to Confront Corruption' in late March.

Dr Muhammad Mohan

President

Transparency International-Malaysia

EDITORIAL



A CALL FOR TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In this issue, we delve into the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2023 released by Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) on 30 January 2024. The report sheds light on Malaysia's progress and areas of concern regarding corruption perception within the nation.

It's heartening to note that Malaysia's CPI score has risen by three points, from 47 to 50, compared to the previous year. This improvement has propelled us to the 57th position in the global ranking, a step up from 61st in 2022. Such progress is indeed commendable and reflects efforts towards better governance and accountability.

However, amidst these gains lies a cause for apprehension. Recent events, such as the discharge not amounting to acquittal (DNAA) in the Yayasan Akalbudi case involving Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid, raise concerns about the integrity of our institutions. While this development occurred after the data collection period for CPI 2023, its potential impact on our rankings for 2024 cannot be overlooked.

Dr. Muhammad Mohan, President of TI-M, rightly points out that while we celebrate incremental improvements, we must remain vigilant. The DNAA incident underscores the importance of continuous efforts to combat corruption and uphold transparency.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's directive to aim for a top 25 global ranking in CPI by 2033 is ambitious and laudable. Yet, concrete plans to achieve this goal are essential. Without a clear roadmap with defined milestones, previous disappointments in meeting CPI targets may recur.

Transparency and accountability must extend to all sectors, including mega projects. The lack of transparency surrounding projects like MRT3 and High-Speed Rail is concerning, especially given the significant taxpayer funds involved. Thorough reviews and assessments, along with public disclosure of pertinent information, are imperative to ensure the legitimacy of such endeavours.

To bolster Malaysia's anti-corruption efforts, TI-M has advocated many measures. These include enhancing the independence of institutions like the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), separation of Attorney-General and Public Prosecutor roles, enacting new laws such as the Political Financing Act, Asset Declaration Act and Government Procurement Act, and amendments to legislation such as the Whistleblower Protection Act.

As we navigate the path towards a more transparent and accountable society, it's crucial for stakeholders, including the government and civil society, to collaborate earnestly. Only through collective action can we truly effect lasting change and elevate Malaysia's standing on the global stage. Let's heed the call for transparency, embrace accountability, and work towards a future where integrity reigns supreme.

Eulis Rachmatiah Iskandar

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY (NACS)

Exploring Strategies to Combat Corruption: Insights from the Focus Group Discussion

Transparency International Malaysia (TI Malaysia) continues its unwavering commitment to combating corruption. Recently, our EXCO member, Alan Kirupakaran, represented TI Malaysia at a pivotal event – the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on the Development of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS), hosted by Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). This event, held on December 6th at the Bangi Resort Hotel, gathered representatives from 10 organisations, including the Malaysian Corruption Watch (MCW), the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS), and Rasuah Busters.

The primary objective of this FGD was to contribute to USIM's research initiative to develop the NACS for the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC). The research sought to garner insights into current corruption issues, propose enhancements to anti-corruption efforts in Malaysia, and formulate the NACS document.

Various topics were discussed, ranging from understanding corruption to perceptions of contemporary corruption issues and strategies for anti-corruption initiatives. Alan

Kirupakaran provided valuable perspectives on these topics, emphasising the importance of fair and impartial enforcement by authorities, the role of Parliament in overseeing the MACC, and the correlation between anti-corruption endeavours and Malaysia's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score.

Furthermore, Kirupakaran highlighted recommendations by TI Malaysia and other non-governmental bodies to strengthen anti-corruption legislation, such as regulations on political financing and asset declaration. He underscored the imperative for the public sector to fulfil its duties without external interference, emphasising the need for integrity and accountability at all levels of governance.

In conclusion, TI Malaysia remains steadfast in combating corruption and promoting good governance practices. We commend all stakeholders' contributions to the FGD and reiterate our commitment to working towards a corruption-free Malaysia. Let us continue our collective efforts in the fight against corruption, building a future where integrity prevails and transparency reigns supreme.

THE NEXTGEN PARTY YOUTH FORUM IS "FOSTERING GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH OPEN INFORMATION LAWS: CAN PARTIES LEAD CHANGE?" AT INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA



The youth panel with the moderator and academic from IIUM

In the realm of democratic governance, transparency and accountability serve as indispensable cornerstones. In light of this, the recent NextGen Party Youth Forum, held under the theme "Fostering Greater Transparency and Accountability Through Open Information Laws," provided a platform for robust discourse and insightful deliberations. Gathering esteemed speakers from various political backgrounds and academic expertise, the forum delved into the pressing need for enhanced transparency and accountability mechanisms, particularly through the lens of open information laws. The event, attended by International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) students and streamed live on social media platforms, offered a comprehensive exploration of pertinent issues and potential solutions.

The proceedings commenced with an enlightening address by Dr. Muhammad Mohan, President of Transparency International Malaysia, setting the tone for the discussions ahead. Following this, Dr. Zahid Zamri, Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, IIUM, extended a warm

welcome, underscoring the significance of the forum's theme in contemporary political discourse.

The panel of speakers, comprising distinguished figures from political circles and academia, articulated their perspectives eloquently and deeply. Mohamad Siddiq Bin Dato' Mohd Azani, a member of the executive council of BERSATU Youth Wing, ignited the dialogue with a fervent call for greater exposure and promotion of freedom of information laws in Malaysia. He underscored the imperative of transparency and accountability, advocating for decentralised decision-making processes to bolster governance effectiveness.



Dr Normala Mohd Adnan sharing her experience as an academic

Subsequently, Norsabrina Japar, Secretary-General of Wirawati Warisan, emphasised the indispensability of transparency in sustaining democratic norms. Her impassioned plea for comprehensive disclosure, particularly regarding party finances and decision-making processes, resonated strongly with the

audience. Nabil Halimi, Deputy Youth Chief of Angkatan Muda Keadilan, illuminated the nuances of information accessibility in the digital age, cautioning against the pitfalls of misinformation. He underscored the challenges of implementing open information laws while highlighting his party's commitment to reform.

Dr. Normala Mohd Adnan, an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, IIUM, provided invaluable academic insights, delineating the nuances of open information laws and the imperative of strong political will for their effective implementation. Drawing upon her extensive expertise, she underscored the importance of learning from localised initiatives in states like Penang and Selangor to inform national-level legislative frameworks.

The forum culminated in a dynamic Q&A session, fostering an interactive exchange of ideas between the panelists and the audience. Moderated by Ho Yi Jian, Research Analyst at the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Asia HQ, Malaysia, the session encapsulated the spirit of collaborative engagement and intellectual inquiry.

The NextGen Party Youth Forum served as a beacon of enlightenment, illuminating pathways toward greater transparency and accountability in Malaysia's political landscape. As we navigate the complexities of governance in the 21st century, forums of this nature emerge as crucibles for forging a more equitable and participatory democratic ethos.

STRENGTHENING CORPORATE INTEGRITY: INSIGHTS FROM IIM'S VISIT TO TI-M



From left: Justin Jarret, Chuah Yean Ping, Eulis Racmatiah, Dr Muhammad Mohan, Datuk Nor Yahati, and IIM's representatives

The recent visit of the Institute of Integrity Malaysia (IIM) to Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) marked a significant step towards enhancing corporate integrity in Malaysia. Led by Datuk Nor Yahati, the discussions centered on crucial aspects such as

the direction of the Corporate Integrity System Malaysia (CISM), collaboration opportunities, and promotional strategies. Through this engagement, both organisations reaffirmed their commitment to fostering transparency and accountability within the corporate sector, laying the groundwork for future collaboration and initiatives promoting integrity.

The exchange of ideas and experiences during the visit highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing corporate governance and integrity challenges. By leveraging the expertise and resources of both IIM and TI-M, stakeholders can work together to strengthen the corporate integrity framework, ultimately contributing to a more transparent and responsible business environment in Malaysia.

COLLABORATING AGAINST CORRUPTION: TI-MALAYSIA'S DISCUSSION WITH EU ON AN INTERFAITH PROGRAM

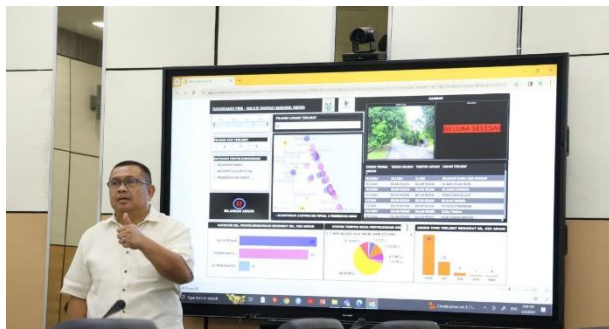
Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) recently engaged in a fruitful discussion with the European Union (EU) regarding an upcoming interfaith forum and Iftar event. Scheduled for March 26, 2024, at Co-labs Co-working Space, Naza Tower, KL, the event aims to address pressing issues related to corruption in Malaysia.

Titled 'Crossing Faiths, Confronting Corruption,' the forum will bring together religious leaders and representatives from various backgrounds to discuss recent developments in Malaysia's fight against corruption. With the focus on the impact of corruption on Malaysia's growth and nation-building, the event provides a unique platform for sharing insights and strategies from religious perspectives. The collaboration between TI-M and the EU underscores the importance of multi-stakeholder approaches in combating corruption and promoting transparency in Malaysia.



Dr Muhammad Mohan and Mr Timo Goosman

COLLECTIVE ACTION PROJECT PROGRESS: TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA ENGAGES WITH MAJLIS DAERAH MARANG



Rezaidi Ishak presented the Collective Action's Dashboard

In a pivotal meeting, Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) engaged with representatives from Majlis Daerah Marang to discuss advancements in the Collective Action project. Essential agenda items included evaluating the current project status and timeline. Representatives Alan, Rezaidi, and Asyraf from TI-Malaysia participated actively alongside counterparts from Majlis Daerah Marang. Valuable feedback from monitoring zones A, C, and E was exchanged, shedding light on project

implementation. Moreover, the meeting featured a presentation of PowerBI's dashboard, showcasing the status of complaints. As collaboration intensifies, both

entities reaffirm their commitment to fostering transparency and addressing community concerns.

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA 26TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024: FOSTERING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY



TI-M's Executive Committees and members

The Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) 26th Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the 9th of March 2024 at the Crystal Crown Hotel in Petaling Jaya. The AGM commenced with the customary, President's Welcoming Address by Dr Muhammad Mohan, emphasising the fundamental values that underpin TI-M's initiatives. It reaffirmed the organisation's unwavering commitment to combat corruption and uphold ethical standards in Malaysia's socio-political landscape.

Following the address, members confirmed minutes from the preceding 25th Annual General Meeting held on 11th March 2023. This segment allowed members to revisit past

discussions, ensuring accuracy and continuity in the organisation's record-keeping processes. Matters Arising from the previous AGM were then discussed, allowing members to address any lingering concerns or follow-ups and fostering a culture of accountability and responsiveness.

A significant highlight of the AGM was the presentation and adoption of the Annual Report for 2023/2024. This comprehensive document encapsulated the organisation's activities, achievements, and challenges throughout the year. The Annual Report provided insights into TI-M's multifaceted efforts to promote transparency and combat corruption at various levels of society.

In conclusion, TI-M 26th Annual General Meeting epitomised the organisation's unwavering dedication to fostering transparency and accountability in Malaysia. Members reaffirmed their commitment to the organisation's mission through robust discussions, decision-making processes, and the adoption of key documents. As TI-M continues its journey, the AGM serves as a cornerstone for driving positive change and building a more transparent and ethical society for all Malaysians.

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA ADVOCATES FOR WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENTS



Dr Muhammad Mohan presented "The Sin of Corruption- A Religious Perspective" book to YB Kulasegaran

Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) took a significant step forward in combating corruption by presenting proposed amendments to the Whistleblower Protection Act to YB Kulasegaran, Deputy Minister of Law & Institutional Reforms. During the meeting, Exco Chew Phye Keat highlighted the importance of strengthening whistleblower protection in the country's legislative framework. The proposed amendments aim to enhance safeguards for whistleblowers, encouraging more individuals to come forward

and report instances of corruption without fear of retaliation.

In addition to advocating for legal reforms, TI-M also presented Deputy Minister Kulasegaran with a copy of their latest publication, "The Sin of Corruption: A Religious Perspective." This book delves into corruption's moral and ethical dimensions, aligning with TI-M's multifaceted approach to combatting this societal scourge. The exchange underscores the organisation's commitment to fostering collaboration between civil society and government entities in Malaysia's ongoing fight against corruption.



Chew Phye Keat highlighted the importance of strengthening whistleblower protection in the country's legislative framework.

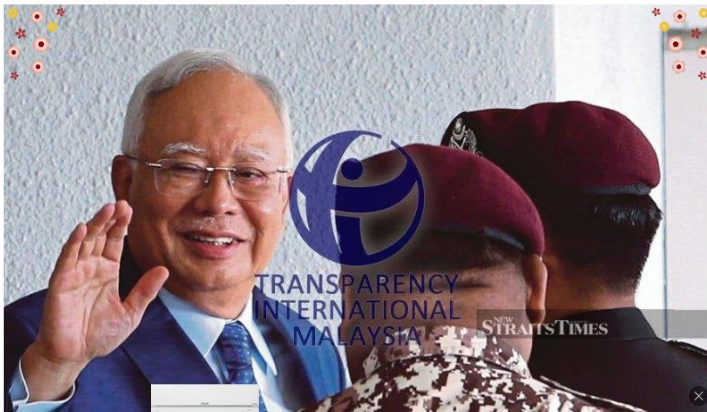
MEDIA PRESENCE

malaysiakini

TI-M joins chorus of groups calling for full disclosure by Pardons Board



By Adib Povera - February 2, 2024 @ 7:34pm



mk NEWS

M'sia climbs to 57th rank in Corruption Perceptions Index

Isabelle Leong

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STAY VIGILANT IN FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Dr Muhammad Mohan, President, Transparency International Malaysia

31-Jan-24 08:30



Malaysia ranks 57th in global corruption perception index, trails Singapore in Asean

Picture by Sayuti Zamudin
Story by R. Loheswar

HIGHLIGHTS

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WHEN DOES POLICY LOBBYING CROSS THE LINE?

Dr Muhammad Mohan, President, Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M)
18-Mar-24 07:45



Navalny's Death and the Continuing Global Fight Against the Power of Corruption

The murder of Alexei Navalny is a wake-up call to provide more support to valiant campaigners fighting against corruption.

February 17, 2024

By [Frank Vogl](#)

The murder of Alexei Navalny was inevitable. Vladimir Putin hated the man. He feared him.

Navalny's that drew large crowds in Russia, centered on Kremlin corruption. He demonstrated that Putin and his cronies were robbing the Russian people. Nobody likes to be impoverished by thieves.

Russians learned from Navalny about the palaces, the yachts, the private planes and all the other baubles that Putin enjoys. Navalny's movement was all about the single most vulnerable feature of all authoritarian leaders – corruption.

The power of corruption

Western media, diplomats, government leaders – not to mention the titans of Western business – constantly downplay the political force of mass public campaigns against corruption in countries run by kleptocrats.

Rather, they talk vaguely about weaknesses in governance. They assert that strategic and commercial interests are their priority and are more important than corruption. They are wrong. Navalny knew its power. It cost him his life.

Boris Nemtsov, a former Russian Deputy Prime Minister who had subsequently secured a large Russian following by exposing Putin's corruption, knew the political power of the corruption issue. He was assassinated in 2016 in front of the Kremlin.

Principles and interests

Marie Yovanovitch, the former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, who was fired by Donald Trump, wrote in her memoir:

“Our values and our interests are nowhere more aligned than when it comes to fighting corruption. When leaders view their positions in government as sinecures serving their personal interests rather than those of their constituents, it not only contravenes our values, it also goes against our interests, our long-term interests.”

She lost her job because she wanted to make corruption a key issue in her diplomatic work. Most Western diplomats may agree with her in theory, but fail to risk their careers to confront kleptocratic regimes when stationed in Moscow and Cairo and Islamabad.

Collusion

The silence – indeed the complicity – of such diplomats damages the fundamental interests of the mass of the citizens in whose countries they serve.

Former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder calls Putin his friend – and has accumulated substantial wealth as a result. Trump propogandist Tucker Carlson sought to promote himself just last week by offering Putin a two-hour interview where the Kremlin boss could promote himself unchallenged.

Providing the evidence

Navalny never indulged in self-serving flattery. He was on a mission. He knew that convincing the public that their national leader is a thief is not easy. It calls for repeated publication of new evidence. Navalny was a master of this art.

His demand that the rule of law should prevail gained traction because the evidence that he brought to public attention was overwhelming.

Clash of civilizations

Putin fears the truth and those who tell the truth. So too do other autocrats. The jails of Egypt, Azerbaijan, Belarus and assorted other countries are full of journalists and activists who have had the courage to try and expose the grand corruption of national leaders.

Just as Western governments, and many parts of the media, largely ignored the plight of Navalny over the last couple of years as his confinement in Russia became increasingly oppressive, so the multitude of other political anti-corruption leaders in prisons in many countries are mostly ignored.

The fight for Ukraine’s independence today is at the center of what U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse has warned is a “clash of civilizations between a rule of law civilization, and an autocratic, kleptocratic civilization.”

Accepting impunity

When national leaders can steal staggering sums of the people’s cash with impunity, then they are telling us that they do not care about the rule of law. They care only about greed and power.

When Americans in their millions sing the praises of Donald Trump, then they fail to comprehend that if he wins another term in the White House, he will enrich himself mightily at the expense of all American citizens.

There are no American versions of Navalny. There should be. Navalny-type films need to stream on the major TV platforms, supported by those politicians who know the truth and who, like Whitehouse, understand what is at stake.

Citizens understand

Russian citizens who understood what Navalny told them have no opportunity today to unseat Putin. More Russians who indicate some opposition are being jailed than at any time since Putin came to power more than two decades ago.

Putin’s paranoia increases and, as it does, so those with the courage to voice opposition are beaten and jailed (and, as was Navalny’s fate, murdered).

Citizens in many countries understand the fundamental injustice of being robbed by their leaders. The enormous vote in the recent election in Pakistan for supporters of Imran Khan, despite forceful opposition from the military, which continually seeks to accumulate power and wealth, is a vote against corruption.

South America battles corruption

Despite massive efforts to prevent a fair election, the citizens of Guatemala recently ousted a corrupt regime and supported Bernardo Arévalo, whose campaign was based on restoring democracy and ending corruption.

The citizens of Argentina made a radical choice in recently electing Javier Milei as president solely because this mostly unknown academic, who had never held public office, was not part of the long-ruling cabal of corrupt politicians who had brought the nation's economy to its knees.

Supporting the activists

Navalny gave his life to side with his fellow citizens against government corruption. There are others like him – far less well known – in many countries who are taking personal risks each and every day to seek democratic freedoms, the rule of law and honest governments for their countries.

I can only hope that the murder of Navalny is a wake-up call to Western establishment leaders – in politics, business, government and academia – to provide far more public support to the valiant anti-corruption campaigners.

Meet the Team

EXECUTIVE (COMMUNICATION & PROJECT) - NUR AFRINA

Meet Nur Afrina Mohd Jafri, she completed her Bachelor of International Relations (Hons.) at the University of Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNISZA) in 2022, where she studied subjects such as International Human Rights Law, Foreign Policy, and Diplomacy Theory and Practice and more. With a keen interest in women empowerment and the establishment of safe spaces for marginalized communities, she actively engaged in volunteerism activities, igniting her passion for societal contribution. Motivated by a profound commitment to make a meaningful impact, Afrina began her professional journey by joining Transparency International Malaysia in 2024.

Recognizing corruption as a pervasive issue exacerbating inequalities and injustices faced by vulnerable communities, she aspires to leverage her skills and knowledge to enhance legal frameworks and combat corruption, thereby contributing to a more equitable and just Malaysia. In her role as a Communication and Project Executive, she spearheads the curation of educational and promotional content, including project campaigns across Transparency International Malaysia's (TI-M) social media platforms. Additionally, she actively engages stakeholders and manages programs for TI-M's corporate members, ensuring seamless coordination and impactful outcomes.

