

India rated among top seven in world corruption index

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India has been placed among the seven "most corrupt" countries in a statistical index drawn up by a German non-governmental organisation measuring perceptions of corruption in 41 countries.

Transparency International (TI), a non-profit-making German agency, has drawn up a "corruption index" on the basis of a 1995 study of corruption in 41 countries. It places India 35th, only a few shades better than the Philippines (36), Brazil (37), Venezuela (38), Pakistan (39), China (40) and Indonesia (41).

The 1995 TI corruption index, an initiative undertaken by the Berlin-based TI together with Johann Graf Lambsdorff, an economist with the University of Goettingen, "is a poll of polls (on corruption) representing the average scores that individual countries have been given by international businessmen and financial journalists when polled in a variety of contexts", said TI in an explanatory note accompanying its report.

"It is not an assessment of the corruption level in any country as made by TI or Johann Graf Lambsdorff. Rather it is an attempt to assess the level at which corruption is perceived by businessmen as impacting on commercial life," the note said.

TI added: "To the extent that any country has a problem with its ranking, this lies not with this index but rather with the perception that businessmen polled apparently have of that country. Their perceptions may not be a fair reflection on the state of affairs, but they are a reality. It is this reality that the index seeks to assess."

The least corrupt countries, according to the 1995 corruption index, are New Zealand, Denmark, Singapore, Finland, Canada, Sweden, Australia and Switzerland.

The United States is rated 15th, the United Kingdom 12th, and Germany 13th.

The corruption index will be kept updated and posted annually on the Internet.

The index has been prepared by using seven surveys, including three from the World Competitive Report from the Institute of Management Development in Lausanne (1992-1994), three from the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd, Hong Kong (1992-1994) and a 1980 survey from Business International, New York.

In the index there are three figures given for each country. The first is the country's overall integrity ranking on a scale of 10. A score of 10 equals an entirely clean country while zero equals a country where business transactions are entirely

dominated by kickbacks and extortion etc. No country scores either 10 or zero. India's score is 2.77.

The second column equals the number of surveys in which a country has been included from 2 to 7.

The greater the number, the more reliable the assessment. The number of surveys for India is five, among the most reliable assessments.

The third column indicates the variance of the rankings. A high number (like 5.86 for Argentina) indicates a high degree of deviating opinions and a low number (such as 0.01 for Denmark) indicates an almost perfect concordance. In the case of India, the number is 1.63.

TI said that it has only been possible to include in the 1995 index countries which have themselves been the subject of a number of such corruption polls. If the list of 41 excludes several countries, "it is because the polls surveyed does not include them. It is hoped to broaden the scope of the index in future years," the organisation said.

On the board of directors of TI is Peter Eigen of Germany, who is the chairman, Kamal Hossain of Bangladesh and Frank Vogl of the US, both vice chairmen and other representatives from the UK, the Philippines and Kenya.

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