

Gossip Influenced Surveys

by Janet Jagan

According to the Stabroek News report of September 24, 2008, "Guyana still ranks among the most corrupt countries slipping three places on the Transparency International 2008 Corruption Perception Index (CPI)". Guyana is listed as 126th in a survey of 180 countries and is the lowest ranked English-speaking Caribbean nation, the "second lowest ranked Caricom territory behind Haiti." The Transparency International is based in Germany. "The CPI measures the perceived levels of corruption among public officials and politicians in countries, based on different expert and business surveys. Four surveys were used to determine Guyana's score", states the report in Stabroek News.

It seems that the key word in all of this is "perceived" corruption. This perception of corruption in Guyana can be traced to the media in this country which, to a large extent, is extremely hostile to the government and the governing party, the PPP. There can be no doubt that this so-called perception of corruption is not based on any accepted methodology, but on the most disgusting

letter columns and commentaries by the most vicious and "cranky" writers.

Take a look at the allegations of Guyana being the "lowest ranked English speaking Caribbean nation." The July 11, 2008 edition of the British newspaper the Guardian, reports that the Commons (House of Commons) Foreign Affairs Committee "in a highly critical report published last Sunday the Committee accuses the Foreign Office (of Britain)

investigation by US law enforcement agencies over the alleged rape of a US citizen."

And what about neighbouring Trinidad where a leading politician has been on trial for having received bribery money, and others are involved in corruption charges re the construction of the new airport? And its Health Minister and family are alleged to be the recipient of millions of dollars in contracts given to the family-owned company.

been no protection of these felonies which have gone to the courts.

But what about certain political and civic citizens who have publicly cried "foul" against charges of thefts in privately owned banks and tried to prevent prosecutions or removal from jobs of those involved in bank thefts? It's strange that efforts to bring to justice persons responsible for such losses have been resisted by certain people, and

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of being "too hands off" amid concerns about "rampant" corruption within the self-governing islands and the suppression of freedom of speech." The Guardian is referring to the Turks and Caicos Islands of the Caribbean! It also refers to "political interference" in the islands' judicial system. "At

And what about the new Prime Minister of Barbados' charges about corruption in the previous government?

In Guyana, there has been a spate of charges before the courts on civil servants and private sector employees on corruption and heft of funds. Look at the almost daily publication by

yet the government gets the blame for corruption by the German-based group that apparently is not looking very deeply into corruption in many countries including ours.

Where does Pakistan, for example, stand in the Transparency International survey? Its new Presi-



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for his cuts in dirty deals.

In Colombia, the Supreme Court has accused the President of buying votes from members of Congress, and so, on it goes!

In South Africa, a complicated set of circumstances have arisen over the removal of corruption charges against the man who is expected to be the next President of the country. Is there or is there not, strong charges of corruption and where does South Africa rate in the survey?

In Malaysia and in Thailand, strong charges of corruption have been made and the contender for the President of Thailand has had to leave his country because of such charges? In Israel, the Prime Minister has been forced to resign due to corruption charges. Where are these countries listed? None

released by the German-based Transparency International is "flawed". It appears that there has been a cover-up of the really corrupt countries.

One has only to look at the United States of America to see widespread corruption, especially arising out of the system known as "lobbying". Lobbying has promoted a system wherein certain private and commercial firms use their position to influence Congressmen and public servants to further the aim of powerful companies. This is done by various methods, including favours provided by these powerful companies and groups to Congressmen and women who sit in the House of Representatives and Senate, to do their bidding as regards legislation and other matters. Favours like trips including airfare, hotels and expense accounts are given out for support requested, as well as other high priced gifts.

Contracts to companies are awarded, particularly war contracts which can reach the billion dollar level. Companies like Halliburton, once led by the Vice President of the USA, receive billion dollar contracts arising out of the war in Iraq. So the USA would

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of being "too hands off" amid concerns about "rampant" corruption within the self-governing islands and the suppression of freedom of speech." The Guardian is referring to the Turks and Caicos Islands of the Caribbean! It also refers to "political interference" in the islands' judicial system. "At the centre of the corruption claim is the islands' Chief Minister Michael Misick, who is alleged to have built up a multi-million dollar fortune since he was elected in 2003. He is currently under

And what about the new Prime Minister of Barbados' charges about corruption in the previous government?

In Guyana, there has been a spate of charges before the courts on civil servants and private sector employees on corruption and theft of funds. Look at the almost daily publication by private companies mostly, that "so and so" is no longer employed by that entity. Obviously something very wrong has been done by that person. Corruption exposed! That means that there has

yet the government gets the blame for corruption by the German-based group that apparently is not looking very deeply into corruption in many countries including ours.

Where does Pakistan, for example, stand in the Transparency International survey? Its new President spent 11 years in jail for corruption, and charges of corruption were dropped after the assassination of his wife, the former Prime Minister Bhutto. Yet the President of Pakistan is com-



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In Malaysia and in Thailand, strong charges of corruption have been made and the contender for the President of Thailand has had to leave his country because of such charges? In Israel, the Prime Minister has been forced to resign due to corruption charges. Where are these countries listed? None of these horrors exist in Guyana. Head of the Guyana Presidential Secretariat Dr Roger Luncheon has declared that the information

up of the really corrupt countries.

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Contracts to companies are awarded, particularly war contracts which can reach the billion dollar level. Companies like Halliburton, once led by the Vice President of the USA, receive billion dollar contracts arising out of the war in Iraq. So the USA would have to rank high in the "perception" of corruption, surely outweighing such "flawed" charges against Guyana.