



PRESS RELEASE

Corruption in Government services leaves BPL Households in a lurch, says TII-CMS India Corruption Study 2007 report

New Delhi, 28 June 2008 – Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in India are made to cough up about Rs 9,000 million as bribe to avail basic and need based public services, according to **TII-CMS India Corruption Study 2007**, released today by Transparency International, India (TII) and Centre For Media Studies (CMS). The report was released by the Vice President of India Shri M. Hamid Ansari at India Islamic Cultural Centre.

Police tops the chart, as far as corruption in 11 selected public services that were a part of the survey are concerned. Of the 5.6 million BPL households that interacted with the police last year, a whopping 2.5 million paid Rs. 2,150 million as bribe for some work or the other. Most of these households interacted with police for simple registration of a complaint.

The second highest in terms of monetary contribution among 11 selected public services is, Land records and Registration Services. Nearly 3.5 million BPL households paid Rs. 1,224 million as bribe.

“This kind of corruption that denies people their entitlement to basic and need based services, many of which may be ‘free’ by law, results in the poor finding themselves at the losing end of the corruption chain”, said Admiral (Retd.) R H Tahiliani, Chair of Transparency International India (TII). *“This results in increased disparity in income, while the guilty acts with impunity”,* he said. *“This also increases disparity in income and deepens poverty”.*

This study conducted by CMS surveyed 22,728 BPL households, across the states, throughout the country adopting the perception, experience and estimation (PEE) model. The methodology included household level sample Survey, exit interviews at service delivery outlets, discussions with the concerned ‘service providers’ in each case and observations on display of information at the service delivery points.

“The ultimate proof of inclusive growth and bridging the divides is the extent of access to essential public services by those in below poverty line. That is what this 2007 study of TII-CMS brings out”, observed Dr. N Bhaskara Rao, Chairman, CMS, speaking on the occasion.

The TII-CMS study also revealed that PDS service was not readily available as 5.36 million BPL families had to pay bribe or use a contact to avail services that was basically meant for them. Majority pointed out that they had bribed officials/staff in order to get ration card.

For the poor who have no recourse but to go to government hospitals, situation is disappointing. Almost 4 million BPL households had to bribe hospital staff to get services like getting admission in the hospital, getting a bed, diagnostic services and getting an OPD card. The total amount of bribe paid to the hospital staff/official by poor in the last one year is estimated to be Rs 870 million. Nearly **one million** households were denied hospital services simply because they either refused to offer bribe or could not afford that kind of money, to pay hospital staff/official.



“ For such people, the consequences of ill health are particularly bleak. Also corruption literally violates their human rights, as they are denied the care that the government is obliged to provide” says Anupama Jha, Executive Director, Transparency International India.

The survey further revealed that in order to get electricity connection or to get faulty meter rectified people have to bribe officials/staff of the electricity department. Similarly staff and officials of school indulge in corrupt practices in order to admit the child of poor parents, issuing certificates to them and promoting the child from one class to another. It was found that amount paid as bribe by BPL households was Rs 120 million for availing school services.

It was found that one-third of BPL households paid bribe in a year in availing one or more of the 11 public services covered. The services include basic services such as Public Distribution System (PDS), Hospital Service, Senior Secondary School Education, electricity and water supply. Need based services included National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, land records and registration, forest, housing, banking and police service.

According to the Project Director of the study, Dr. Subrato K. Mondal, CMS, *“several welcome initiatives like RTI Act, e-governance including massive computerization etc. will only be effective to bring transparency in the system if the information is available in the public domain”*.

For more information, please contact:

	Pragya Baseria : 011-29224519, 9911513044 e-mail: pbaseria@transparencyindia.org
	Subrato K. Mondal: 011-26851660 e-mail: info@cmsindia.org