

**2007 CORRUPTION
PERCEPTION INDEX
BY TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL**

Rank	Country	2007 CPI Score
1	Denmark	9.4
1	Finland	9.4
1	New Zealand	9.4
4	Singapore	9.3
4	Sweden	9.3
12	United Kingdom	8.4
14	Hong Kong	8.3
20	USA	7.2
43	MALAYSIA	5.1
43	South Africa	5.1
72	China	3.5
72	India	3.5
84	Thailand	3.3
123	Timor Leste	2.6
123	Vietnam	2.6
131	Philippines	2.5
138	Pakistan	2.4
143	Indonesia	2.3

Malaysia great place for retirees but...

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KUALA LUMPUR: It was a day of rankings for Malaysia as global

and the United Kingdom.

Malaysia emerged tops for its low cost of living, modern infrastructure and facilities, pleasant weather, political stability and that English is widely spoken

rankings for Malaysia as global surveys revealed how it had fared in several fields: thumbs up for becoming a retirement haven and for trying to battle corruption, but where business is concerned, its ranking dropped.

In battling corruption

Malaysia moved up a notch to the 43rd spot on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2007, scoring 5.1, up by 0.1 from last year.

"If we translate this into perception, it means that the civil service is still corrupt. I can state without equivocation that the last three years have been disastrous," said Transparency International-Malaysia founding president Tunku Abdul Aziz Ibrahim.

Topping the 180-country index were Denmark, Finland and New Zealand, each scoring 9.4. Countries which beat Malaysia included Hong Kong, in 14th place and with a score of 8.3, Slovenia (27th place; 6.6) and Botswana (38th place; 5.4).

Tunku Abdul Aziz said though this year's ranking was the best for Malaysia since the index started in 1995, there was still a great deal to be done.

In becoming a retirement haven

Malaysia is among the countries of choice where foreigners prefer to spend their retirement.

It ranked seventh, along with Spain and South Africa, in the 29-nation poll.

Number one on the Fifth Annual Global Retirement Index was Mexico, followed by Ecuador, Italy, Panama (last year's top destination), and Australia and Malta, the joint fifth, while France and Thailand tied for 10th place.

Malaysia's high ranking can be attributed to benefits for retirees under the Malaysia My Second Home programme, which has attracted some 10,600 expatriates since its launch 11 years ago, mostly from China, Bangladesh

and India, political stability and that English is widely spoken.

It beat developed countries such as New Zealand (12th placing), the United States (19th), Ireland (27th) and the UK (last spot).

The index was compiled by the *International Living* magazine's website, *internationalliving.com*, a global lifestyle, travel and investment site.

In doing business

Malaysia remains among the world's top 25 easiest places to do business but faces intense competition from countries in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Released yesterday, the World Bank's annual Doing Business survey showed Malaysia fell three places to 24, from 21 last year, despite implementing reforms in two areas.

The results may not have captured work that the high-powered Pemudah task force has done to reduce red tape, said its co-chairman Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon.

The task force was formed in February, while the survey covered the period between April last year and June.

Experts and business leaders said the results were worrying.

"Malaysia needs to do a lot more to stay competitive now that many countries are on the fast track," said economist Prof Datuk Dr Mohamed Ariff of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research.

"Action to improve the delivery system has been taken but progress remains slow," said Stewart Forbes of the Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Countries which beat Malaysia included Georgia and Saudi Arabia, the former jumping 17 places to the 18th spot.

The ex-USSR country which achieved independence only in 1991, had made changes to a slew of regulations, speeding up approvals for construction permits and simplifying procedures for registering property.