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International Anti-Corruption Day

CORRUPTION STIFLES PROGRESS

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In October 2003, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Convention against Corruption. Every year on December 9th, International Anti-Corruption Day raises public awareness for Anti-Corruption. It also encourages the public to work on innovative solutions aimed at winning the battle against corruption. Corruption is defined as dishonest or fraudulent conduct.

The International Anti-Corruption Day is observed globally on December 9 to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the Convention in combating and preventing it. Corruption has become an inevitable issue nowadays. No region, community, or country is immune to it.

Corruption can be stopped by exposing corrupt activities and risks that may otherwise remain hidden, keeping the public sector honest, transparent and accountable, and helping to stop dishonest practices. We must ensure that public sector employees act in the public interest.

According to the United Nations (UN), Corruption affects all areas of society. Preventing corruption unlocks progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, helps protect our planet, creates jobs, achieves gender equality, and secures wider access to essential services such as healthcare and education.

While it is everyone's right to benefit from strong anti-corruption efforts, misconduct and wrongdoing is stealing away valuable resources at a time when they are most needed to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

The 2021 International Anti-Corruption Day seeks to highlight the rights and responsibilities of everyone - including States, Government officials, civil servants, law enforcement officers, media representatives, the private sector, civil society, academia, the public and youth - in tackling corruption, the UN says.

And yet it is not only countries that need to unite and face this global problem with shared responsibility. Every single person - young and old - has a role to play to prevent and counter corruption, in order to

promote resilience and integrity at all levels of society, the UN says.

To achieve this, policies, systems and measures need to be in place for people to be able to speak up and say no to corruption. The United Nations Convention against Corruption emphasizes the responsibility of Governments to put in place effective whistle-blower protection to ensure that persons who speak up are protected from retaliation. These measures contribute to effective, accountable and transparent institutions towards a culture of integrity and fairness.

Campaign 2021

A six-week campaign starting at the beginning of November aims to highlight the role of key stakeholders and individuals in preventing and countering corruption in line with the theme, "Your right, your role: say no to corruption". Each week will focus on one of these key topics.

Education and youth, Sport, Gender, Private sector, COVID-19 and International cooperation

The campaign also aims to share good practices and examples of preventing and countering corruption worldwide through strengthening international cooperation against corruption; tackling linkages with other forms of crime; enabling the recovery and return of stolen assets; developing innovative solutions; advancing prevention through education; leveraging youth engagement; and mobilizing allies in civil society, academia, and the private sector.

Reducing the risks of mismanagement and corruption during the pandemic requires the involvement of strong anti-corruption bodies, better oversight over emergency support packages, more open and transparent public procurement and enhanced anti-corruption compliance by the private sector. In addition, countries also need to ensure support to and protection for whistleblowers and journalists uncovering corruption during the pandemic as well as bring their national anti-corruption frameworks in line with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

Background

Corruption is a complex social, political

STOP
CORRUPTION



and economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability.

Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existing is the solicitation of bribes. Economic development is stunted because foreign direct investment is discouraged and small businesses within the country often find it impossible to overcome the "start-up costs" required because of corruption.

On October 31, 2003, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption and requested that the Secretary-General designate the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as secretariat for the Convention's Conference of States Parties (Resolution 58/4).

The Assembly also designated December 9 as International Anti-Corruption Day, to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the Convention in combating and preventing it. The Convention entered into force in December 2005.

Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, the media and citizens around the world are joining forces to fight this crime. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are at the forefront of these efforts.

When it comes to Sri Lanka, corruption became a hot topic after Independence in 1948 and it increased with the time. Usually all say here in Sri Lanka corruption begins from the top and goes to the bottom. This is a common belief but it is just a myth. But carefully examining the progress of the country from 1948, it is very clear that here in Sri Lanka corruption goes from bottom to top and not from the top to bottom.

Sri Lankan children start to be corrupt

find out various ways to avoid standing in queues. Employees in the state sector take everything home from the office. It starts from the pen and ends with vehicles, lands etc.

By now, we Sri Lankans experience various hardships in our day-to-day lives. Explosions of gas, shortages of various items, etc. are among them. Corruption is behind all these but we all must remember that it is from the bottom to top and not from top to bottom. Sometimes politicians become hostages of corrupted officials in State Ministries. Sometimes, even Cabinet Ministers become helpless inside a highly corrupted system managed and controlled by corrupted state officials with over 30 or 40 years of experience in corruption.

Therefore as long as people of any country are corrupted, there is no way out from corruption for that country, no matter how hard any Government tries to correct it. Only the Government gets destroyed and not the corruption. When the whole system and all citizens become highly corrupted there is no way out for that country because there is no point to start to break the vicious circle. Corrupted people always demand corruption and they get rid of people and the Governments which try to stop corruption. It is a chain.

Corruption can be minimized if the relevant authorities can stop the current system of admitting children to state schools. This is because admitting children to private schools has also become corrupted here in Sri Lanka by now. The process can be started from here because parents will not need to teach their children how to lie even before admitting them to the school.

First of all, all citizens of a country or at least the majority citizens of a country need not to be corrupted. Only then corruption can be removed from the state and private sector. After that comes the Government. Corrupted citizens of a country walk nowhere from where they stand at this moment and they only walk towards more and more corruption which will end with the total destruction of that specific country and the people.

