

Corruption reports and cases fall to all-time low in 2024

Graft watchdog received 177 reports, of which 75 were registered for investigation

David Sun
Crime Correspondent

Singapore in 2024 recorded its lowest number of corruption cases yet, both in terms of reports lodged and new cases registered.

The Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) received 177 corruption-related reports in 2024, of which 75 were registered for investigation, it said in its release of its annual statistics on May 28. In comparison, there were 215 reports and 81 cases in 2023, and 447 reports and 118 cases in 2016.

Of the 177 reports it received in 2024, CPIB said 61 of them were

made anonymously.

A total of 133 people were prosecuted in court in 2024 for offences investigated by CPIB.

The conviction rate for CPIB cases in 2024 was 97 per cent, with four acquittals and three cases pending appeal hearings.

Despite the lower numbers in 2024, the national anti-graft agency said recent high-profile corruption cases show that Singapore cannot let its guard down.

Citing the cases involving former transport minister S. Iswaran and the couple from Citiraya, CPIB said it "will not hesitate to take firm enforcement action against all perpetrators who engage in cor-

ruption activities, including those who try to launder their tainted proceeds".

Iswaran was sentenced to 12 months' jail in October 2024 after pleading guilty to five charges.

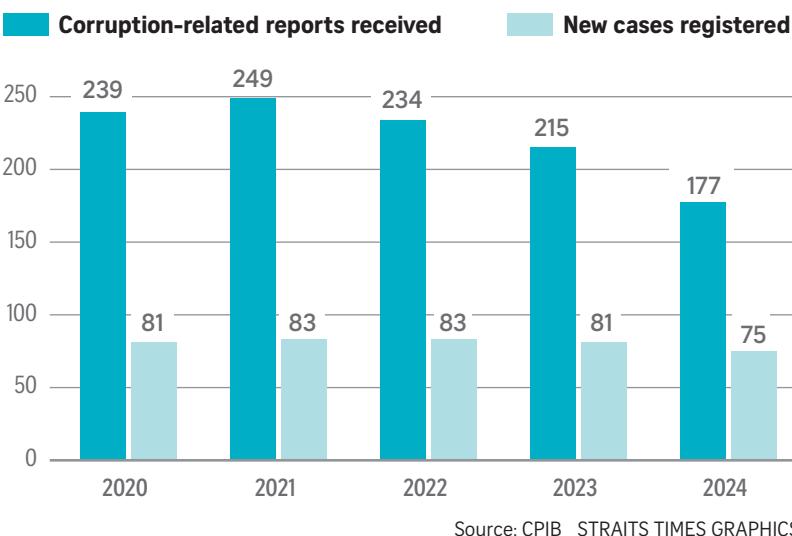
He had obtained valuable items as a public servant from property tycoon Ong Beng Seng. He had also obstructed the course of justice by making payment of \$5,700 for a business-class flight he had taken from Doha to Singapore in 2022 at Ong's expense.

Iswaran, who is currently under home detention, is expected to be released soon, while Ong's case is still before the courts.

In the Citiraya case, the then president of recycling company Citiraya Industries Ng Teck Lee and his wife Thor Chwee Hwa absconded in 2005 when CPIB investigated them for allegedly embez-

Numbers down

The Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau said that while the situation remains firmly under control, recent high-profile cases show Singapore cannot afford to let its guard down.



zling some US\$51 million.

They were arrested in Johor Bahru in 2024 and brought back to Singapore to be charged. Their cases are still before the courts.

The number of public-sector cases remained low, accounting for just seven of the 75 cases registered for investigation.

The remaining 68 cases were

watchdog Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index report released in February.

This was a first for Singapore in 14 years.

Singapore was also ranked the third-least corrupt nation in the world, which is the Republic's highest position since 2020, after Denmark and Finland.

As part of its release, CPIB also published the results of a 2024 Public Perception Survey, which showed 97 per cent of respondents rating corruption control efforts in Singapore as Good, Very Good or Excellent.

This is an increase from 96 per cent and 94 per cent in 2022 and 2020, respectively.

CPIB said heavy punishment, effective laws, political determination and a zero-tolerance culture for corruption were cited in the survey as the top factors contributing to the low corruption rate in Singapore.

"CPIB continues to take firm enforcement action without fear or favour in corruption cases involving both the public and private sectors," it said.

"Singapore's corruption situation remains firmly under control. We will continue to strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders to enhance prevention efforts and amplify anti-corruption messages."

davidsun@sph.com.sg