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No spike in cases of graft during pandemic: CPIB

Wong Shiying

Graft-related reports rose slightly last year, although the number of cases that warranted investigation held steady, said the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) yesterday.

There were 249 reports lodged with the bureau last year – 4 per cent more than the 239 in 2020. CPIB registered 83 of them for investigation, compared with the 81 reports it probed in 2020.

A report is registered for investigation if there is enough evidence for CPIB to investigate. This is determined by the quality of relevant information provided.

The bureau said: “The corruption situation in Singapore remains firmly under control... Singapore’s anti-corruption efforts continue to be well regarded internationally.”

The Covid-19 pandemic did not lead to an increase in the number of corruption cases here, it added.

The Republic ranked fourth out of 180 countries in

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Most cases investigated by CPIB involved private sector

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last year's Corruption Perceptions Index.

The conviction rate for CPIB cases last year was 98 per cent.

One of these convictions involved PUB assistant engineer Jamaludin Mohamed, 58.

He was jailed for more than 11 months last year for accepting \$45,169 in bribes from Ganisan Suppiah, a project manager of water and gas pipeline subcontractor Pipe Works.

Ganisan was sentenced to seven months and two weeks' jail.

Jamaludin had approached Ganisan with an offer to facilitate and expedite work being done by the company in exchange for money.

CPIB said: "While CPIB has not observed an increase in the number of corruption cases in Singa-

pore during the Covid-19 pandemic, we take such cases seriously and will not hesitate to take firm enforcement action as they can have wider consequences."

As with previous years, the vast majority of corruption cases probed came from the private sector, with 74 registered last year, or 89 per cent of all cases registered for investigation by the bureau.

Of these, nine involved public-

sector employees – from the police and the Ministry of Manpower – rejecting bribes offered by private-sector individuals.

The number of public-sector cases registered remained low last year, with nine cases, and was similar to the annual average of the preceding four years.

CPIB said it has partnered institutes of higher learning, such as Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), on digital projects that aim to cultivate integrity in young people.

One such initiative is Web game Corruzione, which helps young people learn about corruption is-

sues in an interactive way.

"An animated educational series targeting lower primary and pre-school children is being developed," said the bureau on its ongoing partnership with NYP.

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- Those with information on corruption cases can contact CPIB anonymously by writing to the CPIB Headquarters at 2 Lengkok Bahru, calling 1800-376-0000, lodging an e-complaint via the CPIB website, or e-mailing report@cpib.gov.sg