

Tackling Corruption in India- Some Statistics

April 25, 2011

Dear all,

Even as we debate what the proposed Lokpal institution should look like and do, the existing anti-corruption mechanisms seem to be doing something to tackle corruption. A frequent complaint is that corruption cases do not reach their logical conclusion within reasonable time limits. Delays in the registration and investigation of cases and the long wait for government's sanction for prosecution of the accused are two major factors that prevent speedy disposal of cases. The anti-corruption mechanisms established in different States are working to tackle corruption albeit at differential speeds and varying impact. We may not be happy with the results but all cases of corruption do not seem to be falling through a black hole. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) collects and publishes on an annual basis data from across the country about corruption cases as well as other criminal cases.

PRS Legislative Research, New Delhi has used this NCRB data for the decade 2000-2009 to create an interactive visualisation of State-wise statistics about tackling corruption.

Please click on or cut and paste in the address box: <http://bit.ly/eDES7S> for an interactive visualisation on corruption data from 2000 to 09.

You will find the data grouped under the following categories:

- a) Total number of corruption cases registered State-wise, in each year,
- b) The conviction rate State-wise, in each year and
- c) The value of property seized or recovered from the accused, State-wise, in each year.

Please click on or cut and paste in the address box :
<http://bit.ly/corruptioncasesinindia> for raw data on each State to use in your own analysis.

What do the statistics tell us?

1) Two States with the highest number of registered cases also had poor rates of conviction. Maharashtra had the highest number of cases registered (4,566) with a conviction rate of 27%. Recovery or seizure of property from the accused was a measly Rs. 9.1 crore. Rajasthan had the second highest number of registered cases at 3,770 with a conviction rate of 1/3rd. Recoveries stood at a mere Rs. 9.7 crores.

2) Some members of the infamous BIMAROU group seem to have done better than others in combating corruption. Bihar with 617 cases registered had the highest conviction rate at 78%. Property worth Rs. 14.5 crores had been recovered or seized from the accused. Between 2005 and 2007 the conviction rate was 100%. The conviction rate fell to 60% in 2009 but property worth Rs. 7.8 crores was recovered during the same year- the highest during the decade.

3) Madhya Pradesh also had a higher conviction rate at 50% (1,257 cases registered) and recoveries worth Rs. 36.2 crores.

4) Orissa with 2,957 cases registered during the same period had a 1/3rd conviction rate but logged in the highest recovery rate amongst States at Rs. 63 crores.

5) Karnataka with 2,422 cases registered had the lowest conviction rate at 14% but had recovered or seized close to Rs. 20 crores worth of property from the accused.

6) Sikkim with 155 registered cases had the second highest conviction rate at 68%. Kerala with 1,572 registered cases had the third highest conviction rate at 65%. No recoveries have been recorded for this period in Kerala.

7) Andhra Pradesh (2,686 registered cases) Tamil Nadu (1,719 registered cases) and Assam (95) also had high conviction rates at 58%, 55% and 54% respectively. In Andhra Pradesh recoveries had been made to the tune of Rs. 13.6 crores. In Tamil Nadu this figure stood at Rs. 6.9 crores. No recoveries were reported from Assam.

8) Gujarat tomotomed as one of the best governed of States in India had 1,880 registered cases but with a conviction rate of less than 1/3rd (31%). Seizure or recovery of property was at a low of Rs. 2.4 crores in 10 years. Jammu and Kashmir kept close company with Gujarat with a near-similar conviction rate (30%). However it logged higher recoveries at Rs. 9.5 crores. Even Maoist-affected Chhattisgarh (267 cases, 48% conviction rate and Rs. 3.4 crores worth of recoveries) seems to have done better than Gujarat in tackling corruption.

9) Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura had a 0% conviction rate despite registering a handful of cases. Goa also had a 0% conviction rate despite registering 32 cases during the decade.

10) West Bengal had only 9 cases registered during the decade. No cases were registered at all in 2008-09. Even though the State has not withered away from the Left-combine ruled West Bengal (Marx's prediction is yet to come true), corruption seems to have withered away! Has it really or is this due to gaps in the data available? That is for the experts to find out and comment on.

What about the Central Government?

This dataset does not tell us how the Central Government- the biggest entity of all Governments in the country has tackled corruption. According to statistics provided by the Ministry of Personnel the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had registered 2,276 corruption cases during the years 2008-2011 (up to 31st March). The CBI had filed charge sheets in 1,924 cases during the same period (though some of these cases may have been registered much earlier). Information about rates of conviction and recovery of properties is hard to come by.

For the full text of the Ministry's answer please click on or cut and paste in the address box : <http://164.100.47.132/LssNew/psearch/QResult15.aspx?qref=103492>

[Disclaimer: The aforementioned statistics are selected from the data and research placed in the public domain by NCRB, PRS Legislative Research and the Ministry of Personnel, Government of India through the Lok Sabha website. CHRI does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy of these statistics. In case of any doubt readers are requested to contact the respective organisations for seeking clarification.]

Proactive disclosure of corruption-related statistics- an urgent need

Data about conviction rates and recoveries in corruption cases is not available easily in the public domain. This is one area which desperately needs proactive disclosure by all governments, State and Central. Disclosure of Statistics relating to corruption must be made voluntarily under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) of the *Right to Information Act, 2005*. Section

4(1)(b)(xvii) permits the appropriate government to proactively publish any other information relating to its working. This data must be uploaded on websites and updated every month.

Can the proposed Lokpal and Lokayukta mechanism secure better results?

A well drafted Bill based on sound constitutional and legal principles will be the first step towards making this happen. Changes in the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 will also be necessary apart from developing an independent and effective mechanism for combating corruption in the judiciary.

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Thanks

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