

CORRUPTION IS POLITICAL AMONG US



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According to the Transparency International indexes, Armenia shares the 120-125 positions in the world among the most corrupt countries, while last year it was the 109-114. In fact, Armenia registered a regression by 11 points. In your opinion, what determines Armenia's constant regressions?

If we approach the question from the scientific point of view, it is a little earlier to say that Armenia registered a regression. The indexes of corruption in Armenia are 2, 7 while last year it was 2, 9, and in other words 0, 2 percent of regression. In general, only in case of 0, 3 percent of difference we can speak about regression. But there is a worrying circumstance which is that last year Armenia registered 0, 1 percent of regression and if the situation keeps moving like this we may say that we will have growth of corruption. It is a little earlier to speak but there is nothing to be happy for because starting from 2003, no progress was registered. The general index of perception is 3 in Armenia, if it was 8, I would not worry because we would be one of the less corrupt countries of the world.

What ways, methods, does our country have to undertake to fight against corruption? What is to be done? Our government seems to have repeatedly aroused this issue. They reveal corrupt professors, etc...

The experience shows that such kind of struggle against corruption is not effective though we cannot say it does not help at all. This year, progress was registered in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia. None of these countries is democratic, but the progress was registered thanks to the struggle against minor corruption.

In our country, like in the above-mentioned countries, the primary is the political corruption. There is a misunderstanding that corruption is not taking bribes. Bribe taking is only one type of it. Corruption is the misuse of official positions.

Since corruption has a system character, the fight against it must have the same character too. This means that by taking several professors you cannot solve the issue. You must understand

the reasons of the corruption. In the end, the struggle against it will not be effective if there is no public support.

What type of struggle against corruption must there be?

The struggle will be serious only if there is political will. For example, in Poland, in 1995 elections were held and the Polish president Valensa who was a brilliant leader and fighter against communism was defeated because his economic policy did not satisfy people. In the same year, in Armenia there were held elections accompanied by bribes, violence, and expressions of political corruption. The cornerstone of political corruption among us was put in 1995.

In the future, these phenomena deepened especially in 1998 after the change of government and we see that elections do not fulfill their function. One of the problems is the link of political and economic leaderships of the country in which result we had a very bad result from the point of the country's occupation. In other words, country's public policy, tax, customs and so on is decided by the interests of a group of oligarchs. This is also corruption.

In your opinion, is the question on the struggle against the corruption primary within the oppositional and governmental circles?

By the way, we have studied the pre-electoral programs of the parties running for 2007 parliamentary elections. No one dwells on the corruption maybe because it is not a primary issue in their agendas. During 2007-2008 elections, corruption did not become a primary one either because there is no general perception in Armenia that after all, rigged election is also corruption. Our society is very demoralized. Considering this fact, as well as the tolerance our society shows towards corruption, I would not blame the opposition that it does not consider this issue a primary one but I have to say to the political figures that if they bring up this issue, people will follow them. I cannot say that the opposition loses when not paying attention to the corruption issues.

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