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REVISTA BRASILEIRA DE POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS
BRAZILIAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC POLICY

**Harnessing Novel Technologies
to Fortify Anti-Corruption Efforts:**

Assimilating India's Experiences
into Uzbekistan's Fight against
Criminality

**Aproveitando Novas Tecnologias
para Fortalecer os Esforços**

Anticorrupção: Assimilando
as Experiências da Índia na
Luta do Uzbequistão Contra a
Criminalidade

Abhishek Thommandru

Fazilov Farkhod Maratovich

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OS CONTORNOS SISTÊMICOS DO DIREITO ADMINISTRATIVO SANCIONADOR
BRASILEIRO E A RELAÇÃO COM O DIREITO CONSTITUCIONAL

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Harnessing Novel Technologies to Fortify Anti-Corruption Efforts: Assimilating India's Experiences into Uzbekistan's Fight against Criminality*

Aproveitando Novas Tecnologias para Fortalecer os Esforços Anticorrupção: Assimilando as Experiências da Índia na Luta do Uzbequistão Contra a Criminalidade

Abhishek Thommandru**

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Abstract

Corruption casts a long shadow over Uzbekistan's socio-political landscape, hindering economic growth and social harmony. To confront this formidable challenge, Uzbekistan seeks to draw upon India's extensive experience harnessing New Emerging Technologies (NET), such as the Digital India mission and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), for effective anti-corruption measures. This paper conducts a comprehensive exploration of Uzbekistan's corruption landscape, unveiling the historical, cultural, and institutional factors fueling this pervasive issue. It delves into corruption's severe consequences on Uzbekistan's economy, governance, and society, underscoring the critical need for robust anti-corruption strategies. Leveraging India's proven insights, the paper meticulously dissects successful strategies tailored to the Indian context, including strengthening anti-corruption laws, empowering agencies, fostering transparency, promoting accountability, and engaging civil society. Recognizing that combating corruption demands a multi-dimensional approach, it advocates a holistic strategy encompassing legal, institutional, societal, and cultural dimensions. Through comparative analysis, the research offers recommendations for Uzbekistan's anti-corruption arsenal. These include establishing specialized agencies, enacting comprehensive anti-corruption legislation, promoting transparency and accountability via digital platforms, and nurturing a culture of integrity through education and awareness initiatives. While acknowledging disparities between Uzbekistan and India, the paper underscores adapting strategies to the local context through institutional capacity-building, international collaboration, and civil society engagement. Unwavering political commitment and leadership are stressed as pivotal. The integration of India's experiential insights and strategic utilization of NET provide Uzbekistan a unique opportunity to confront pervasive corruption. By embracing these recommendations tailored to its context, Uzbekistan can aspire to a more transparent, accountable, and corruption-free society – paving the way for sustainable development, good governance, and social justice.

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Keywords: Criminoverse; Uzbekistan; Anti-corruption; Governance; Transparency.

Resumo

A corrupção projeta uma longa sombra sobre o cenário sócio-político do Uzbequistão, dificultando o crescimento econômico e a harmonia social. Para enfrentar esse desafio formidável, o Uzbequistão busca aproveitar a vasta experiência da **Índia** na utilização de Novas Tecnologias Emergentes (NET), como a missão Digital **Índia** e a Interface Unificada de Pagamentos (UPI), para medidas eficazes contra a corrupção. Este trabalho realiza uma exploração abrangente do cenário de corrupção no Uzbequistão, revelando os fatores históricos, culturais e institucionais que alimentam esse problema generalizado. Ele explora as graves consequências da corrupção na economia, governança e sociedade do Uzbequistão, ressaltando a necessidade crítica de estratégias anticorrupção robustas. Aproveitando os conhecimentos comprovados da **Índia**, o trabalho analisa minuciosamente as estratégias bem-sucedidas adaptadas ao contexto indiano, incluindo o fortalecimento das leis anticorrupção, o empoderamento de agências, o fomento da transparência, a promoção da responsabilidade e o engajamento da sociedade civil. Reconhecendo que o combate à corrupção exige uma abordagem multidimensional, defende uma estratégia holística que englobe as dimensões jurídica, institucional, social e cultural. Por meio de análise comparativa, a pesquisa oferece recomendações para o arsenal anticorrupção do Uzbequistão. Estas incluem o estabelecimento de agências especializadas, a promulgação de legislação anticorrupção abrangente, a promoção da transparência e responsabilidade por meio de plataformas digitais, e o cultivo de uma cultura de integridade através de iniciativas de educação e conscientização. Embora reconheça disparidades entre o Uzbequistão e a **Índia**, o trabalho enfatiza a adaptação de estratégias ao contexto local por meio do desenvolvimento de capacidades institucionais, colaboração internacional e engajamento da sociedade civil. O compromisso político inabalável e a liderança são enfatizados como fundamentais. A integração dos insights experienciais da **Índia** e a utilização estratégica das NETs proporcionam ao Uzbequistão uma oportunidade **única** de enfrentar a corrupção generalizada. Ao abraçar essas recomendações adaptadas ao seu contexto, o Uzbequistão pode aspirar a uma sociedade mais transparente, responsável e livre de corrupção - pavimentando o caminho para o desenvolvimento sustentável, a boa governança e a justiça social.

Palavras-chave: Criminoverse; Uzbequistão; Anticorrupção; Governança; Transparência.

1 Introduction

Corruption in Uzbekistan is a deep-rooted and multifaceted issue, intertwined with the nation's complex historical and political context. Its pervasive influence extends beyond financial misappropriation, hindering development and progress. Addressing this critical problem requires a strategic and innovative approach that fosters good governance and integrity. In this context, drawing upon the experiences and insights from India, a country renowned for its diverse anti-corruption initiatives and reform efforts, offers a promising avenue to strengthen Uzbekistan's anti-corruption strategies.

This paper explores Uzbekistan's complex criminoverse, focusing on the persistent issue of corruption that has long plagued the nation. The multifaceted nature of corruption is intricately linked to historical legacies and contemporary political dynamics, creating a challenging landscape that demands a comprehensive response. As Uzbekistan confronts the daunting task of combating corruption, it is crucial to seek inspiration and learn from successful anti-corruption experiences. This paper examines the intricate web of corruption within Uzbekistan's criminal justice system while also delving into India's achievements in

implementing anti-corruption reforms. By integrating these insights, we strive to identify potential solutions and develop a more effective approach to tackle corruption in Uzbekistan.

India's experience in fighting corruption has generated valuable qualitative data, revealing effective strategies and initiatives that can be adapted to Uzbekistan's unique context. With a focus on harnessing new emerging technologies (NET), such as blockchain-enabled Know Your Customer (KYC) systems and other practices that foster accountability and transparency in the economy and governance, India's insights offer a rich knowledge base. This research conducts a thorough analysis, including qualitative case studies, expert interviews, and meticulous data examination, to explore how India's anti-corruption insights can be applied to Uzbekistan's specific circumstances. It aims to demonstrate how these insights, despite being developed in a different socio-political environment, can be tailored and customized to address the complex nuances of corruption in Uzbekistan.

Acknowledging the diverse challenges and opportunities in Uzbekistan, this paper avoids proposing a one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, it advocates for a context-specific approach, tailored to Uzbekistan's unique needs in combating corruption. By critically examining and synthesizing India's experiences, this research seeks to provide Uzbekistan with a roadmap to strengthen its anti-corruption efforts through the promotion of transparency, accountability, and ethical governance.

This paper envisions how Uzbekistan can learn from India's experiences and integrate these New Emerging Technology insights into its own anti-corruption narrative. By embracing and adapting these lessons, Uzbekistan can take a significant step towards fostering a culture of integrity and justice, ultimately enhancing the well-being and prosperity of its citizens.

1.1 Uzbekistan's Landscape of Corruption and Criminality: An Overview

The term "criminoverse" encompasses the intricate tapestry of cultural, political, legal, social, and economic elements that shape the environment in which criminal activities occur and are confronted. It represents the universe of crime within a specific geographic area, whether it be a nation, region, or community. The criminoverse is a dynamic and multifaceted system, influenced by a plethora of factors, including historical legacies, geographical characteristics, demographic composition, infrastructure, institutional frameworks, societal norms, values, and belief systems. It not only includes the crimes themselves but also the approaches and mechanisms used to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute, and punish these offenses. As societies transform, so does the criminoverse, evolving to accommodate new forms of criminal activity, emerging technologies, and changes in social, political, and economic circumstances. Consequently, understanding the criminoverse is crucial for the effective operation of law enforcement, the criminal justice system, and crime prevention initiatives.

Uzbekistan, situated in the heart of Central Asia, faces a widespread issue of corruption and crime, as highlighted by its position on the Corruption Perceptions Index. In 2020, Uzbekistan ranked 153rd out of 180 countries, and despite slight improvements in 2022, its ranking of 120th out of 180 countries remains alarming. This ranking emphasizes the significant challenge that corruption poses within the country. In Uzbekistan, corruption manifests in various forms, ranging from everyday instances of petty corruption in routine services to more severe cases of high-level corruption deeply ingrained within government institutions. Bribery, nepotism, and embezzlement are among the most common forms of corruption affecting Uzbekistan's socio-political landscape. Furthermore, the country's law enforcement agencies encounter substantial hurdles in tackling crime, particularly organized criminal activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the presence of well-established criminal networks. Although the government has made notable efforts to combat corruption and crime, these endeavors have underscored the urgent need for comprehensive and transformative reforms to establish a robust anti-corruption framework in Uzbekistan.

Organized crime poses a significant challenge within Uzbekistan's criminal justice system. Sophisticated crime syndicates wield extensive influence, operating through deeply entrenched networks nationwide. To combat this threat, the Uzbekistani government has formed specialized units focused on investigating and prosecuting organized crime. However, these efforts have faced obstacles, including administrative hurdles and external factors that have at times hindered their impact.

India's experience tackling similar issues, particularly its battle against the notorious Mumbai underworld, offers valuable insights Uzbekistan can draw upon. India has employed a comprehensive approach involving intelligence-driven operations, proactive law enforcement tactics, and tough anti-organized crime legislation to disrupt and dismantle criminal enterprises. By adopting analogous strategies, Uzbekistan could substantially bolster its ability to counter organized crime while concurrently reinforcing its overall criminal justice framework.

2 India's experience in anti-corruption measures

To combat its detrimental impacts, the nation has adopted a wide range of anti-corruption initiatives. Chief among these was the formation of the Central Vigilance Commission in 1964, which has played a crucial role in overseeing and investigating corruption cases within government entities. The Right to Information Act of 2005 was a landmark legislation that significantly enhanced transparency and deterred corruption by allowing citizens to access government records. Additionally, the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, passed in 2014, was a major step forward in creating an independent anti-corruption body responsible for investigating corruption allegations against public servants.

However, it's important to recognize that despite these laudable measures, corruption remains deeply entrenched in Indian society. Bribery and nepotism continue to be widespread in government and business dealings, highlighting the immense challenge of tackling systemic corruption that is so deeply rooted. This persistent issue underscores the need for sustained, creative approaches to effectively address and reduce corruption in India.

In recent years, the Indian government has launched several initiatives to tackle corruption, reflecting the country's shifting priorities in this area. These include legislative actions like the Prevention of Corruption Act of 1988, setting up key institutions such as the Central Vigilance Commission and the Central Bureau of Investigation, and introducing transformative programs like the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Digital India. UPI, an innovative digital payments platform, has substantially decreased opportunities for corruption by enabling safe and seamless online transactions. Furthermore, the Digital India program seeks to digitize all government services, reducing the scope for corruption. The government has also launched initiatives like "Jan Dhan Yojana" to provide universal access to bank accounts, enhancing financial transparency. At the same time, the "Direct Benefit Transfer" program has been implemented to transfer government subsidies straight into beneficiaries' bank accounts, eliminating middlemen and reducing corruption risks. These proactive steps offer valuable lessons and inspiration for other countries battling corruption, highlighting the potential effectiveness of similar measures, such as digitalization, in reducing corrupt practices.

However, despite the numerous anti-corruption measures, India's fight against corruption has experienced both achievements and challenges. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013, while a significant step towards preventing corruption, has faced hurdles in its implementation. The Right to Information Act of 2005, a crucial tool for promoting transparency and accountability in government agencies, encounters obstacles due to public officials' unwillingness to disclose information and citizens' lack of awareness about the Act's provisions. The introduction of e-governance initiatives, particularly Digital India, has

simplified government procedures but struggles with problems like insufficient cybersecurity safeguards. At the same time, the controversial demonetization in 2016 and the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) revealed shortcomings in the government’s capacity to effectively plan and implement anti-corruption initiatives. However, these experiences provide important lessons, allowing India to improve and strengthen its anti-corruption tools, with digitalization and UPI becoming key weapons in the battle against corruption.

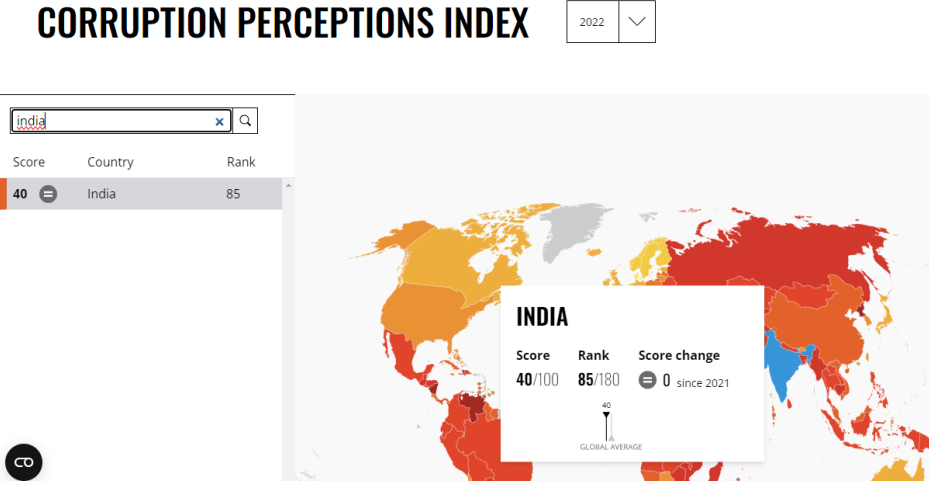


Figure 1 International ranking of corruption: India

2.1 Relatability of India’s experience in Uzbekistan’s context

India’s anti-corruption efforts provide valuable lessons for Uzbekistan, as both countries face widespread and systemic corruption. India’s anti-corruption movement, exemplified by the Lokpal bill of 2011-2012, presents a potential model for Uzbekistan to strengthen its anti-corruption framework. Like India, Uzbekistan has seen the rise of civil society organizations demanding greater transparency and accountability in government, driving support for anti-corruption legal reforms. Furthermore, India’s effective use of technological solutions, such as the Public Interest Disclosure and Protection of Persons Making the Disclosures Bill of 2010, has expanded the reach of anti-corruption efforts to remote and underserved regions. Uzbekistan, facing similar infrastructure and accessibility challenges, can also leverage such technological innovations to overcome these obstacles. By learning from India’s experiences and approaches, Uzbekistan can effectively tackle corruption and foster a culture of transparency and accountability.

Moreover, it’s crucial to acknowledge the significant role the private sector plays in reducing corruption in Uzbekistan. Companies must adopt and uphold ethical and transparent business practices to set a positive example for others to follow. This requires implementing strong internal controls, such as comprehensive anti-bribery and anti-corruption policies and procedures. Additionally, nurturing a corporate culture that values integrity and honesty is essential for maintaining ethical behavior. Furthermore, companies should recognize the wider impact of their actions on society and take responsibility for their broader influence. Collaborative efforts between the private sector and the government to promote anti-corruption initiatives and support their implementation can be highly effective. By working together, these organizations can create an environment characterized by transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct, thereby effectively fighting corruption in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan Corruption Rank						
The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be. A country or territory's rank indicates its position relative to the other countries and territories in the index.						
Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Unit	Frequency
126.00	140.00	177.00	68.00	1999 - 2022		Yearly

Figure 2-Uzbekistan Corruption Rank

Uzbekistan has recently undergone a significant reform of its anti-corruption policies. In 2017, President Mirziyoyev announced the creation of a dedicated anti-corruption agency responsible for investigating and prosecuting corruption cases. This marks a notable shift from the previous system, which primarily relied on the Prosecutor General's office to handle corruption cases. The newly established agency is a promising development in Uzbekistan's fight against corruption, as it comprises trained investigators and prosecutors who are better equipped to tackle complex corruption cases. Moreover, the introduction of mandatory asset declarations for public officials represents a crucial step in enhancing transparency and accountability. However, there are concerns that the Uzbekistani government's current anti-corruption approach may place too much emphasis on punitive measures, potentially overshadowing the essential need to address the underlying causes of corruption, such as weak institutional frameworks and lack of transparency.

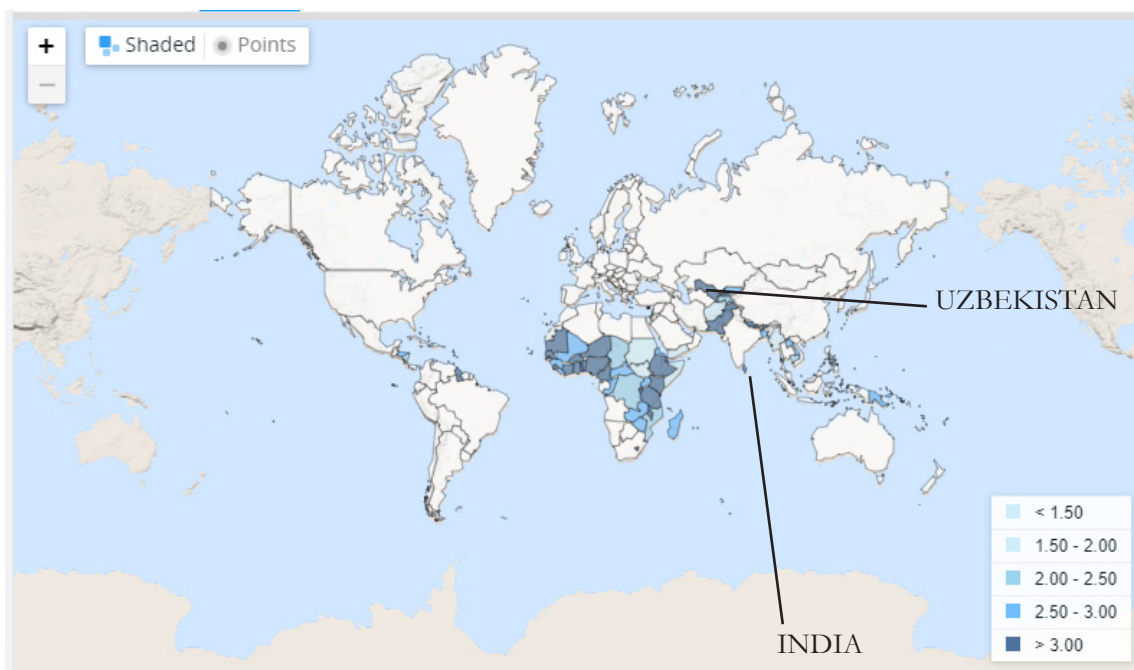


Figure 3 The World Bank CPIA Transparency, Accountability, and Corruption in public sector

3 Current Policies Instituted by the Uzbekistani Government¹

¹ Staples, J. (1993). Soviet use of corruption purges as a control mechanism: the Uzbekistan case. *Past Imperfect*, 2.

The Uzbek Criminal Code covers several actions that are internationally recognized as corrupt practices, including embezzlement, abuse of public office, and various forms of bribery. However, there are notable gaps in the Criminal Code that require attention. For instance, there are no specific provisions for bribing foreign public officials or offering gifts to public officials. Furthermore, the code does not define offenses related to non-material gain bribery, third-party bribery, or the promise of a bribe, as distinct from the actual exchange of bribes. Moreover, Uzbekistan's legislative framework differs from OECD conventions, especially in how it distinguishes between bribery in the private and public sectors, which may raise concerns about the proportionality of criminal penalties for private sector offenses.²

Uzbekistan's approach to regulating conflicts of interest is significantly limited, with a narrow definition of the term and a lack of comprehensive regulation. There are no legal restrictions on post-public service employment, even within entities previously overseen by the respective public servant. Furthermore, the country does not mandate asset disclosure by public officials or have a systematic procedure for evaluating conflicts of interest in public procurement.

Moreover, Uzbekistan lacks legal safeguards to protect whistleblowers who report corruption allegations, highlighting a significant gap in its anti-corruption framework. Although the Uzbekistani government has implemented policies aimed at modernization, liberalization, and economic growth, along with efforts to combat corruption, challenges persist. These include limited independent media outlets and political opposition, which hinder comprehensive corruption eradication and the promotion of democratic governance. Addressing these challenges will require continued government attention and intervention to build a more transparent and accountable system.

Despite progress in Uzbekistan's efforts to combat corruption and organized crime through increased transparency and accountability, eradicating corruption entirely remains a challenging task. While the government has raised penalties for corruption and empowered law enforcement, systemic issues such as weak institutional frameworks and insufficient political will persist. The economy's reliance on extractive industries also makes it vulnerable to corruption. Addressing these foundational problems is crucial to effectively tackling corruption and associated criminal activities.

Additionally, Uzbekistan's judiciary lacks independence, often collaborating closely with prosecutors and law enforcement, and acquittals are rare. The legal system emphasizes obtaining confessions, and bribery is sometimes used to avoid conviction, particularly in politically significant cases. Unfortunately, impartial judicial forums are scarce, especially in major business disputes, further complicating the fight against corruption and organized crime.³

The Higher Economic Court, which is purportedly responsible for overseeing economic matters, is not considered a reliable venue for resolving disputes by business people. In fact, this court has been implicated in numerous contentious expropriation cases and unfavorable judgments against foreign investors, as detailed in the preceding section of this report.

Independent legal practitioners have faced persistent harassment and pressure from state authorities for a prolonged period. Securing adequate legal defense counsel is a challenging task for most individuals accused of crimes. This predicament has been exacerbated since January 2009 when a new law came into effect, effectively dismantling previously autonomous lawyers' associations and replacing them with an entity subordinate to the Ministry of Justice.

According to a Human Rights Watch report, this law has significantly weakened the criminal defense bar, effectively silencing advocates who were willing to take on politically sensitive cases and raise allegations

2 Urinboyev, R., & Svensson, M. (2018). Corruption, social norms and everyday life in Uzbekistan. *Corruption and norms: Why informal rules matter*, 187-210.

3 Lasslett, K., Kanji, F., & McGill, D. (2017). 'A Dace with a Cobra': Confronting Grand Corruption in Uzbekistan.

of torture in court. This development has further undermined the independence and effectiveness of legal representation in Uzbekistan, making it even more difficult for those accused of crimes to receive a fair trial and protect their rights.

The lack of trust in the Higher Economic Court and the erosion of the independence of legal practitioners highlight the systemic challenges faced by Uzbekistan’s legal system. These issues not only impact the business environment and foreign investment but also have far-reaching consequences for the protection of human rights and the rule of law in the country.⁴

In Uzbekistan, recent legal changes have diminished the autonomy of lawyers, making them dependent on the executive branch. Media reports often highlight cases of judges in both civil and criminal proceedings accepting bribes. A survey of businesses found that more than 20% confessed to paying bribes “frequently,” “usually,” or “always” during court proceedings. However, it’s crucial to differentiate these instances from cases involving prominent political or business figures. In high-profile cases, judges frequently face restricted discretion and are pressured to adhere to the decisions dictated by those wielding significant influence.⁵

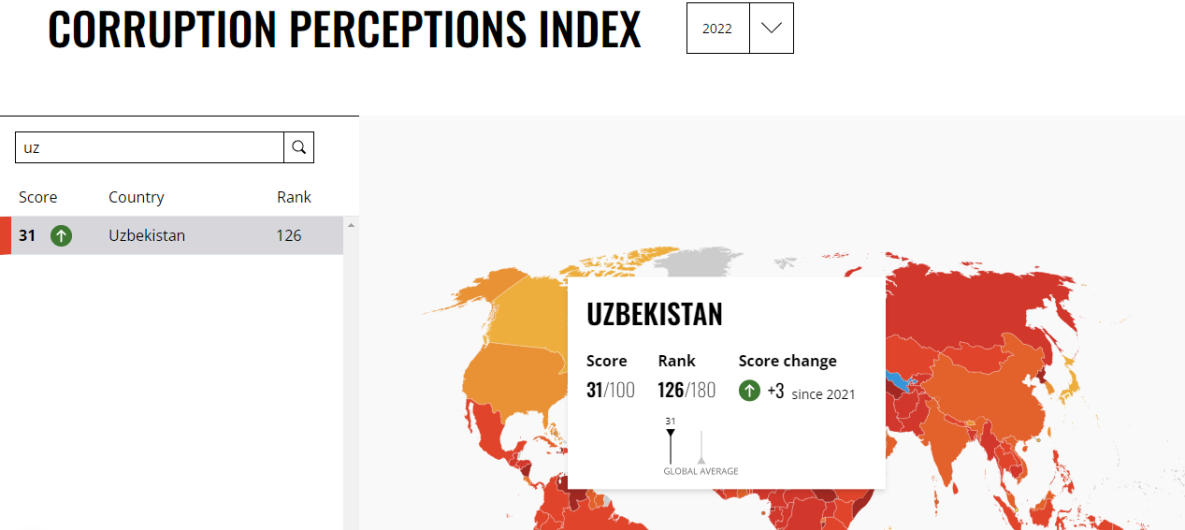


Figure 4 Corruption perceptions index Uzbekistan

3.1 Legal loopholes exploited by corrupt individuals or syndicates

Legal and institutional weaknesses in Uzbekistan have enabled corrupt individuals and networks to act with considerable impunity, a situation that mirrors the challenges faced by many other nations grappling with corruption.⁶ While recognizing the initiatives undertaken to confront these challenges, it’s crucial to acknowledge that considerable hurdles still exist. Corrupt entities in Uzbekistan have exploited various legal loopholes, such as:

- Bureaucratic Complexity:** Intricate bureaucratic processes, combined with limited transparency, can prolong administrative procedures. This creates opportunities for corrupt officials to expedite processes in exchange for bribes.
- Inconsistent Application of Anti-Corruption Laws:** Despite the existence of anti-

4 Urinboyev, R., & Svensson, M. (2013). Living law, legal pluralism, and corruption in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 45(3), 372-390.
 5 Desalegn Abraha, Akmal S. Hyder. (2021). *Transformation of Strategic Alliances in Emerging Markets*. Volume I, Emerald Group Publishing.
 6 Caiden, G. E., & Caiden, N. J. (2018). Administrative corruption. In *Classics of administrative ethics* (pp. 177-190). Routledge.

corruption laws in Uzbekistan, their enforcement has been uneven, enabling corrupt individuals to avoid legal repercussions. This inconsistency stems from political interference and a lack of judicial independence.

3. **Ambiguity in Asset Disclosure:** Incomplete or vague asset disclosure requirements for public officials can provide loopholes for concealing illicitly acquired wealth. The absence of rigorous measures to verify asset declarations has been exploited to hide corrupt gains.
4. **Insufficient Whistle-blower Safeguards:** The lack of robust protections for whistle-blowers leaves individuals who report corruption vulnerable to potential retaliation. This discourages witnesses from coming forward with crucial information.
5. **Political Favouritism:** Nepotism and political patronage have been known to influence key appointments and promotions, allowing well-connected individuals to secure positions of power and influence, often with impunity.
6. **Inadequate Oversight of Financial Institutions:** Insufficient oversight of banks and financial institutions can facilitate money laundering and the movement of illicit funds. This has been exploited by corrupt individuals and organized crime groups to legitimize their ill-gotten gains.
7. **Elaborate Tax Evasion Schemes:** Sophisticated tax evasion schemes, including underreporting of income and shell companies, have been used to evade taxes and launder money, with some individuals and entities benefiting from weak tax enforcement.
8. **Judicial Independence:** The judiciary's lack of complete independence from political influence has led to concerns about the impartiality of legal proceedings, allowing corruption cases to be manipulated or dismissed.

While it is crucial to recognize the Uzbek government's initiatives and recent reforms aimed at addressing legal loopholes that facilitate corruption, as outlined in the "Strategy of Action on Five Priority Areas of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021," these efforts have yielded tangible results, such as increased job creation and significant economic growth. The government has also taken steps to combat corruption by establishing a dedicated anti-corruption agency, promoting open government practices, and enhancing transparency in government procurement processes.

However, the persistence of corruption highlights the complex challenges involved in tackling these multifaceted issues. It emphasizes the ongoing need for sustained efforts to strengthen legal frameworks, increase transparency, and foster a culture of accountability. Addressing corruption requires a long-term, comprehensive approach that involves not only legal and institutional reforms but also a shift in societal norms and values.⁷

In addition to the conventional methods of bribery and manipulation of the judicial system, corrupt entities in Uzbekistan have exploited legal loopholes to their benefit. They have employed strategies such as using shell companies or intermediaries to conceal ownership of businesses and assets, hindering authorities' attempts to trace illicit activities and freeze associated assets. Furthermore, some corrupt individuals have taken advantage of legal provisions that allow for plea bargains or reduced sentences, leveraging their wealth and influential connections to secure favourable outcomes in court.

These legal loopholes not only facilitate the evasion of punitive measures but also undermine public confidence in the justice system. As a result, Uzbekistan's comprehensive anti-corruption efforts must go beyond addressing overt bribery and manipulation to include the closure of these legal gaps, preventing further exploitation by corrupt actors. This requires a multi-faceted approach that involves strengthening

7 Yuldashev, N., Nabokov, V., Nekrasov, K., & Tursunov, B. (2019, June). Innovative development of Uzbekistan agroindustrial complex. In International Scientific and Practical Conference "Digital agriculture-development strategy" (ISPC 2019) (pp. 334-337). Atlantis Press.

legal frameworks, increasing transparency, and fostering a culture of integrity and accountability across all levels of society.⁸

The effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts in Uzbekistan is further hindered by a lack of transparency and accountability within the legal system. Corrupt officials often exploit their influence to manipulate legal processes, undermining impartial enforcement. Furthermore, corruption within the judiciary compromises judges' ability to uphold the law impartially. This creates a sense of impunity among those engaged in corrupt practices, perpetuating a culture of corruption.

To tackle these issues, concerted efforts are necessary to enhance the independence and fairness of the judiciary. This involves comprehensive training for judges and prosecutors on the implications and consequences of corruption, as well as improvements in legal procedures and enhanced protections for whistle-blowers. Moreover, establishing an independent anti-corruption agency with the power to investigate and prosecute corruption cases could significantly bolster Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts.

Given the limitations of Uzbekistan's current anti-corruption measures in comprehensively eradicating corruption, a more holistic approach, informed by India's experience, is warranted. India's extensive experience and diverse range of anti-corruption strategies, along with its willingness to implement them, can serve as a valuable model for Uzbekistan. By drawing upon India's insights and adapting them to its own context, Uzbekistan can develop a more robust and effective framework for combating corruption at all levels of society.⁹

To maximize the benefits of India's experiences, Uzbekistan must carefully consider cultural and institutional differences and adapt these anti-corruption measures to suit its unique needs. The key lesson from India's journey is the importance of determination, political will, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders in the fight against corruption. Therefore, the Uzbek government must undertake a sincere effort to reinvigorate and recalibrate its anti-corruption initiatives, making them more comprehensive and effective in fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity.

Institutional factors pose significant challenges to Uzbekistan's efforts to eradicate corruption from its societal fabric. The country's complex institutional framework includes numerous state bodies and agencies that often operate in silos, leading to coordination gaps and a failure to identify and address instances of corruption among officials. Additionally, the extensive patronage networks embedded within Uzbekistan's political and economic elite limit the government's ability to effectively prosecute the corrupt.

Furthermore, the judiciary, operating with limited powers and lacking independence, is influenced by the executive branch of government, hindering the delivery of impartial justice, especially in high-level corruption cases. Consequently, institutional factors emerge as major obstacles to Uzbekistan's anti-corruption goals, necessitating immediate reforms to instill greater accountability, transparency, and good governance in the system.¹⁰

In addition to internal measures, external factors play a significant role in strengthening Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts. International organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund can provide technical assistance through capacity-building, training, and monitoring programs. Adopting and adhering to international legal frameworks, like the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), can foster cross-border cooperation in investigating and prosecuting corruption-related offenses. Furthermore, diplomatic pressure from foreign countries can incentivize Uzbekistan to tackle corruption more effectively. International sanctions or the withholding of aid can serve

8 Abdurakhmanov, K., Zokirova, N., Shakarov, Z., & Sobirov, B. (2018). Directions of innovative development of Uzbekistan. *Вісник Національної академії керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв*, (3).

9 Chris M. Smith. (2019). *Syndicate Women Gender and Networks in Chicago Organized Crime*, University of California Press.

10 Melanie Manion. (2004). *Corruption by Design. Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*, Harvard University Press.

as powerful deterrents, signaling the consequences of engaging in corrupt practices. In essence, external support can complement domestic anti-corruption measures, reinforce Uzbekistan's anti-corruption framework, and facilitate international collaboration in the pursuit of a corruption-free society.¹¹

Uzbekistan can draw important lessons from India's initiatives, such as the Digital India program, which aims to harness technology to improve governance, enhance citizen services, and promote digital literacy. By investing in the necessary infrastructure to develop a digital economy and strengthen its e-governance capabilities, Uzbekistan can adopt a similar approach. Furthermore, India's experience with decentralization through initiatives like the Panchayati Raj system has empowered local communities and made government processes more transparent and accessible. Uzbekistan can embrace this approach to strengthen grassroots participation and reinforce local governance structures. By studying and implementing India's initiatives, tailored to its unique needs, Uzbekistan stands to gain significantly. When combined with technological advancements, this adoption will greatly contribute to fostering a culture characterized by transparency, accountability, and integrity, thereby substantially enhancing Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts.¹²

11 Zurapov, A. (2019). ANTI CORRUPTION EFFORTS ON MONOPOLY RAILWAY COMPANY IN THE LIGHT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN UZBEKISTAN. *Theoretical & Applied Science*, (7), 210-219.

12 Abduazizov, G. (2022). Anti-Corruption Measures in the Civil Service System of the Republic of Uzbekistan. *International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice*, 7(1).

4 Crucial role of ICT in Anti-Corruption Measures

The swift expansion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digitalization in the 21st century holds immense potential for transforming societal dynamics and public service delivery. In the context of anti-corruption efforts, ICT has been widely recognized for its ability to revolutionize the prevention, detection, and prosecution of corrupt practices. Numerous studies confirm that ICT can serve as a catalyst for enhancing transparency, fostering accountability, and promoting citizen engagement. It also facilitates advocacy and strengthens the interaction between government entities and the public. Among the most praised ICT tools are websites, mobile applications, and emerging technologies such as Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT), big data analysis, and artificial intelligence (AI). These tools make significant contributions to the fight against corruption by improving access to public information, monitoring the activities of officials, digitizing public services, and enabling corruption reporting. By leveraging these technologies, governments and civil society organizations can create a more transparent and accountable environment, reducing opportunities for corrupt behavior and empowering citizens to actively participate in the fight against corruption.¹³

It is crucial to acknowledge that the mere existence and accessibility of these tools do not ensure their effective use. Their adoption depends on the quality of content provided and the characteristics of the user base. ICTs deployed in anti-corruption initiatives operate within the context of existing societal divisions and power dynamics, which are often perpetuated by corruption itself. Without careful consideration of corruption and associated power imbalances during their design and implementation, ICT interventions risk inadvertently reinforcing these issues. Therefore, the success of ICT-based anti-corruption measures relies on their alignment with local contexts, specific needs, cultural backgrounds, and levels of technological proficiency. Policymakers and implementers must engage with the communities they serve to understand their unique challenges and tailor ICT solutions accordingly. This approach involves considering factors such as digital literacy, access to technology, and existing power structures to ensure that the benefits of ICT-based anti-corruption initiatives are equitably distributed and not limited to a privileged few.¹⁴

The interplay between contextual factors, ICT capabilities, and corrupt practices remains an area that requires further exploration. For example, it is unclear how digital public services can most effectively combat low-level corruption in societies with inconsistent internet connectivity. While ICT is often viewed as a tool for fighting corruption, it is important to recognize that it can also have negative consequences when used in ways that reinforce corrupt behaviors. However, ICT has the potential to significantly improve the detection and prevention of corruption, especially at the petty level. By increasing transparency in government activities, ICT can strengthen vertical accountability and reduce corrupt practices. The case study presented in the table below provides empirical evidence of how emerging technologies can combat corruption and promote transparency and accountability in governance.

13 Kim, C. K. (2014). Anti-corruption initiatives and e-government: a cross-national study. *Public Organization Review*, 14, 385-396.

14 Abu-Shanab, E. A., Harb, Y. A., & Al-Zoubi, S. Y. (2013). E-government as an anti-corruption tool: citizens perceptions. *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, 6(3), 232-248.

Table 1 Tech Impact on Corruption & Governance

S No.	New Emerging Technology	Impact from NET in combatting corruption	Empirical Evidences
1	E-Government Services	E-Government Services have the potential to mitigate corruption stemming from the principal-agent problem by facilitating more efficient oversight of public officials by their supervisors within the government. This is especially beneficial when newly elected administrations are committed to tackling deeply entrenched corruption. Moreover, these services enhance transparency by making government information more accessible to citizens and other interested parties, thereby promoting accountability.	There is a substantial body of literature exploring the relationship between e-government and corruption, including several empirical studies of reasonable quality. These studies generally support the idea that e-government can play a role in reducing petty corruption.
2	Crowd Funding Platforms	Crowdsourcing is a sourcing model in which individuals or organizations procure goods or services from a vast, open, and rapidly changing group of participants. When applied to anti-corruption efforts, crowdsourcing platforms collect reports from citizens on incidents of petty corruption, usually through online or telephone channels. These platforms can be initiated by governments or civil society organizations aiming to reduce petty corruption and inefficiencies in the public sector. By increasing upward transparency and collective knowledge, crowdsourcing platforms can heighten the risk of exposure and deter corrupt behavior. However, the effectiveness of these platforms relies on user participation, which can be influenced by various factors such as accessibility, skills, mutual expectations, perceptions, vision, and the external environment.	The impact of crowdsourcing platforms on corruption remains understudied, with a scarcity of rigorous, evidence-based research in this area. Existing literature is limited to a small number of case studies that primarily focus on evaluating the effectiveness of specific platforms. These studies typically assess metrics such as user engagement, the quality and quantity of data collected, and the resulting actions or interventions prompted by the platform. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research that thoroughly investigates the broader implications and potential of crowdsourcing as a tool to combat corruption.
3	Whistleblowing tools	“Digital Whistleblowing Solutions” harness the power of information and communication technology (ICT) to enable individuals to report cases of corruption involving public officials, gathering detailed information on specific instances. These platforms aim to support criminal investigations and galvanize efforts to hold corrupt individuals in positions of authority accountable. GlobaLeaks and the BKMS® compliance systems are prominent examples of such solutions. Whistleblowing tools play a crucial role in the battle against corruption by exposing vital information about cases that might otherwise remain hidden. However, their success depends on both technological and institutional factors. The technological infrastructure of these platforms must prioritize anonymity and security to protect whistleblowers while allowing for continuous communication with relevant authorities. Platform providers must navigate the challenging balance between increasing awareness and managing the influx of reports, ensuring that the system upholds high standards of quality and has the capacity to process reports efficiently and professionally.	The unique features of high-profile and often complex cases arising from whistleblowing revelations contribute to a widespread lack of comprehensive and reliable evidence regarding their efficacy. Zipparo (2001) conducted a large-scale survey of more than 800 public sector employees in New Zealand to gain broader insights into the factors that encourage whistleblowing in the workplace. The survey sought to identify the factors that deter employees from reporting incidents of workplace corruption. The main concerns identified were the perceived lack of sufficient evidence and the absence of legal protections for whistleblowers.

S No.	New Emerging Technology	Impact from NET in combatting corruption	Empirical Evidences
4	Transparency portals	Transparency portals, operated by governments or NGOs, aim to promote citizen oversight and downward transparency by providing information on government activities. However, the effectiveness of these portals depends on thorough and accurate data collection, which is often hampered by insufficient resources and logistical difficulties in many countries. Limited budgets and inadequate infrastructure can impede the gathering and dissemination of comprehensive and up-to-date information, thereby reducing the impact of these transparency initiatives.	Despite the potential benefits of transparency portals, there is a scarcity of robust empirical evidence directly linking their implementation to reduced corruption levels. Moreover, regular evaluations of open data initiatives often reveal that what is commonly labeled as “open data” is, in practice, either not entirely open or only partially accessible to the public. This discrepancy between the purported openness of data and its actual availability and usability can limit the effectiveness of transparency portals in fostering accountability and curbing corrupt practices.
5	Distributed ledger technology (DLT) and blockchain	Blockchain, a decentralized and synchronised database maintained by a peer-to-peer network, is a potential solution for managing public information and preventing fraud and corruption. It can be used by governments to store public transactions, track budget spending, and save land records. Blockchain can also establish direct links between societal actors, eliminating the need for individuals to interact with bureaucrats. This can help in international development cooperation by allowing donors to fund utility costs for schools using bitcoin cryptocurrency. However, blockchain is not a panacea and requires a well-planned policy and coordinated effort from all stakeholders. It may also pose a threat to anti-corruption efforts due to its anonymity and encryption, which could be used for embezzlement or fraudulent deals. The complexity of DLT technologies may raise suspicion in citizens, especially in countries with endemic distrust in government.	the utilization of blockchain technology in the fight against corruption is still primarily in the developmental and pilot phase, with a notable absence of substantial studies examining its impact on reducing corruption.
6	AI technologies	Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, such as neural networks, have the potential to predict and uncover hidden relationships from vast datasets, making them valuable tools in policy making and implementation. One such tool is the self-organizing map, which can extract patterns from large datasets to predict instances of corruption. Public authorities could employ this technology to detect collusion and corrupt practices, thereby enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in governance.	While there is a limited body of literature specifically focusing on the application of AI in the context of corruption, previous studies have successfully employed data-mining techniques and neural networks to predict patterns in related fields such as crime, credit risk assessment, and fraud detection.

5 Anti-Corruption Measure and Institutions

The introduction of anti-corruption initiatives in Uzbekistan has brought about profound changes in the country’s political, social, and economic landscapes. Politically, these measures have bolstered the government’s legitimacy and credibility, tackling the perennial problem of corruption eroding public trust.

This has also triggered shifts in political competition and intra-elite dynamics, leading to the dismissal of corrupt high-level officials. Socially, the anti-corruption drive has fostered greater public confidence in government institutions, promoting civic participation and societal progress. This heightened trust has played a crucial role in reinforcing Uzbekistan's social fabric. On the economic front, the battle against corruption has leveled the playing field for businesses and foreign investors, attracting increased international investments. Uzbekistan's image as a dependable and transparent trading partner has been enhanced, resulting in substantial economic gains. By taking a stand against corruption, Uzbekistan has paved the way for a stable and sustainable future, holding the promise of enduring prosperity for its people.¹⁵

A governance system free from corruption promotes economic growth by attracting foreign investments, fostering a conducive business environment, and encouraging socio-economic development. Corruption hinders economic progress by distorting the allocation of resources, perpetuating market inefficiencies, and undermining the rule of law. In corrupt systems, essential services become the exclusive domain of the wealthy, exacerbating economic inequalities. In contrast, corruption-free governance ensures the fair distribution of public resources, alleviating poverty, enhancing healthcare and education, and promoting inclusive economic growth. Efforts to combat corruption also facilitate international cooperation and domestic stability, strengthening partnerships with other countries and fostering long-term peace and prosperity. Consequently, investing in anti-corruption frameworks and promoting transparency in governance is of paramount importance for governments worldwide.

Transforming Uzbekistan's reputation from a corrupt nation necessitates sustained anti-corruption efforts involving all segments of society. The government must bolster institutional frameworks for preventing and penalizing corruption while promoting transparency and accountability. The private sector should prioritize ethics and social responsibility, particularly in combating bribery and corrupt practices that undermine fair competition. Civil society can contribute by educating and advocating for anti-corruption values, fostering cultural change. International actors should prioritize partnerships that support Uzbekistan's anti-corruption initiatives, including capacity-building, technical assistance, and financial support. By adopting a comprehensive and inclusive approach to fighting corruption, Uzbekistan can create a more equitable and prosperous future for its citizens, cementing its position as a reliable and transparent partner on the global stage.

Considering the intricacies of Uzbekistan's socio-economic and political landscape, eliminating corruption demands a comprehensive, long-term strategy that tackles the root causes and institutional structures perpetuating corrupt practices. This strategy should involve a diverse range of stakeholders and robust international engagement to facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices. In conclusion, the battle against corruption in Uzbekistan requires a persistent and collaborative effort, informed by the experiential insights of countries like India, while being carefully adapted to the unique context of Uzbekistan. By drawing upon the successes and challenges faced by other nations in their anti-corruption endeavors, Uzbekistan can develop a tailored approach that effectively addresses the specific drivers and manifestations of corruption within its borders. Through sustained commitment, inclusive participation, and strategic international partnerships, Uzbekistan can make significant strides in creating a more transparent, accountable, and equitable society.¹⁶

5.1 State Anti-corruption Agencies

In India, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the primary agency tasked with combating corruption and investigating cases involving government officials, politicians, and public servants. As the premier

15 Ismailov, B. (2020). Implementation of Corruption Prevention Measures In The Private Sector Of Uzbekistan. *The American Journal of Political Science Law and Criminology*, 2(12), 41-51.

16 Santen, E. V. (2018). Combating organised crime and terrorism in Central Asia. *Journal of Financial Crime*, 25(2), 309-319.

investigating agency in the country, the CBI operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions.

In Uzbekistan, the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Agency is a result of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated June 29, 2020, titled ‘On additional measures to enhance the anti-corruption system in the Republic of Uzbekistan.’ This Agency holds a unique position as a specially designated government entity responsible for formulating and implementing state policies aimed at preventing and addressing corruption.

The Anti-Corruption Agency operates within a framework of accountability, reporting directly to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan while also being accountable to the chambers of the Oliy Majlis. This structural arrangement ensures a robust and transparent approach to coordinating anti-corruption efforts, aligning with the obligations outlined in the UN Convention against Corruption. It is important to note that the primary authority engaged in combating corruption in Uzbekistan is the Department for the Fight against Economic Crime and Corruption, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Prosecutor General. This department focuses on detecting, investigating, and prosecuting corruption-related offenses.¹⁷

Beyond the law enforcement sphere, two notable institutions play crucial roles in anti-corruption efforts. Firstly, the Accounts Chamber serves as an independent auditing body. Secondly, the principal Control and Revision Division (KRU) within the Ministry of Finance wields significant power, including the authority to suspend or terminate public procurement tenders and initiate financial investigations related to budgetary organizations. It is noteworthy that similar KRUs also exist within the defense and interior ministries, as well as the National Security Service (NSS).

The law enforcement system assumes a central role within the broader context of state and elite corruption in the country. On paper, both the National Security Service (NSS) and the Department for Combating Corruption, Extortion, and Racketeering within the Ministry of the Interior are responsible for addressing economic crimes and corruption. However, empirical evidence gathered from media reports and human rights accounts suggests that there have been instances where state law enforcement authorities have been used in ways that raise concerns. These instances include potential involvement in corrupt activities, actions that appear to target political and business adversaries, and the detention and prosecution of corporate executives in circumstances that may be perceived as part of extortion or expropriation mechanisms.

The NSS, recognized as the most influential agency coordinating anti-corruption efforts, has allegedly been involved in various informal business and economic networks, according to opposition activists and independent investigative reports. Furthermore, the NSS has been implicated in raids on business enterprises, particularly since it acquired the mandate to combat ‘economic crimes’. In 2012, a journalist claimed that the NSS had designated or newly constructed a series of buildings for the coercion and intimidation of business magnates, creating a facility resembling a fortress. Within its inner courtyard, luxury vehicles formerly owned by erstwhile business leaders and prominent investors were impounded, symbolizing the precariousness of any wealth accumulated within Uzbekistan. Media accounts have also highlighted anti-corruption campaigns targeting NSS officers, resulting in the dismissal or arrest of numerous high-ranking NSS personnel in 2014.

Investigations into companies accused of wrongdoing have often been accompanied by aggressive raids carried out by the NSS or other law enforcement agencies. During these operations, employees are routinely detained and subjected to interrogations designed to elicit self-incriminating statements. A report has carefully documented the behavior of law enforcement officers during a campaign against Uzdunrobita in 2012, revealing the use of intense psychological pressure to extract self-incriminating confessions. These

17 Meagher, P. (2004). *Anti-corruption agencies: A review of experience*. College Park, MD: IRIS Center.

interrogations were often conducted late at night, and legal defense representatives were not always granted access to their clients. Moreover, investigators allegedly threatened one of the company's employees, suggesting they would 'search his home and find illegal drugs'. Raids on business premises are typically carried out by masked individuals who are heavily armed and employ aggressive tactics against the staff. In one specific incident involving a German bakery company, it was reported that 'employees were physically assaulted, and company equipment was vandalized'. Remarkably, even German ambassador Wolfgang Neuen was caught up in a raid conducted at the company's Tashkent offices.¹⁸

Corruption is pervasive throughout the ranks of law enforcement agencies, although the methods employed may vary. While the NSS is often involved in business disputes, regular police officers tend to engage in simpler forms of extortion, such as demanding bribes from drivers. Additionally, police personnel are frequently accused of extorting money from criminal suspects, including those convicted of religious radicalism. Similar to other sectors of the state apparatus, it is alleged that bribes are channeled upward through the hierarchy to senior officers, forming a hierarchical structure of control and corruption. This systemic corruption within law enforcement agencies not only undermines the integrity of these institutions but also erodes public trust in their ability to uphold justice and maintain order.¹⁹ Efforts to combat corruption in Uzbekistan can be summarized as follows (Akmal Burkhanov, 2021)²⁰:

Legal Framework and Reforms:

- Adoption of numerous legal documents aimed at preventing corruption.
- Establishment of laws promoting openness and public control.
- Creation of a system to rate the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.

Institutional Structures:

- Formation of committees and agencies dedicated to combating corruption.
- Establishment of the Anti-Corruption Agency.
- Introduction of the Judicial Inspectorate to ensure judicial independence and prevent corruption.
- Focus on recruitment based on meritocracy in the public service.

Education and Training:

- Introduction of specialized courses in "Combating Corruption."
- Collaboration with international organizations for training and expertise.

Public Engagement:

- Conducting social surveys to gauge public perception of corruption.
- Engagement of civil society organizations in the National Anti-Corruption Council.
- Establishment of the "Openness and Transparency in Uzbekistan" Analytical Center.
- Initiatives to involve NGOs and the general public in anti-corruption efforts.

18 Meagher, P. (2005). Anti-corruption agencies: Rhetoric Versus reality. *The Journal of Policy Reform*, 8(1), 69-103.

19 Doig, A., & Norris, D. (2012). Improving anti-corruption agencies as organisations. *Journal of Financial Crime*, 19(3), 255-273.

20 Akmal Burkhanov, "On the path to the normative and institutional development of the fight against corruption". Accessible at: <https://www.un.int/uzbekistan/uzbekistan/path-normative-and-institutional-development-fight-against-corruption>

Information Dissemination:

- Publication of the Uzbekistan Anti-Corruption Digest online magazine.
- Promotion of anti-corruption through contests, hackathons, and educational programs.

International Cooperation:

- Collaboration with UNDP and other international organizations on anti-corruption projects.

These comprehensive efforts aim to create an environment of intolerance towards corruption, enhance transparency, and strengthen the legal and institutional framework to combat corruption effectively in Uzbekistan.

6 Conclusion

Uzbekistan's intricate struggle against corruption and criminal activities within its criminoverse necessitates a multifaceted and comprehensive approach. The current government's commitment to implementing anti-corruption measures is laudable, but there is still a long way to go. Incorporating India's experiential insights, as discussed in this paper, presents a promising avenue for strengthening Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts. However, it is crucial to tackle corruption at both the highest echelons of government and the grassroots level, involving the public in the fight against corruption. By adopting a holistic approach that encompasses all levels of society, Uzbekistan can make significant progress in curbing widespread corruption. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of shared knowledge and experiences in combating corruption is paramount. Uzbekistan can learn valuable lessons from India's journey towards establishing a transparent and accountable governance system. This collaborative exchange between the two nations not only facilitates the sharing of best practices but also strengthens diplomatic ties. In conclusion, integrating India's experiences into Uzbekistan's anti-corruption efforts is a vital step in addressing the country's persistent corruption problem. By learning from India's successes and challenges, Uzbekistan can formulate effective strategies and policies for its own battle against corruption. To achieve this vision, Uzbekistan's authorities must demonstrate unwavering determination in combating corruption, prioritizing its eradication above personal interests and gains. At the same time, civil society must actively participate in exposing and denouncing corrupt practices while advocating for transparency and accountability. Only through collective effort and a commitment to moral and ethical principles can Uzbekistan build a sustainable, prosperous, and just society for its citizens. Uzbekistan faces both opportunities and significant challenges beyond the criminoverse. The country has initiated substantial reforms in its legal and economic systems and its fight against corruption. However, it must also address human rights issues, political freedoms, and economic diversification. The government should continue to foster a more inclusive and transparent political framework, ensure greater independence of the judiciary, and promote a vibrant private sector. Moreover, diversifying export markets and improving the quality of the education system are crucial imperatives. With unwavering commitment to reform, Uzbekistan has the potential to transform into a thriving, democratic nation that serves as a model for the region.

In conclusion, as discussed and empirically elaborated in Table 1 "Tech Impact on Corruption & Governance," emerging technologies hold the promise of being powerful tools in the ongoing battle against corruption. E-Government Services offer increased transparency and accountability, particularly in newly established governments. Crowdfunding Platforms and Whistleblowing Tools have the potential to empower citizens and expose corrupt practices, although there is a need for more comprehensive empirical research to assess their impact accurately. Transparency Portals, while promoting oversight, face challenges in data collection and accessibility. Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) and Blockchain, despite their potential

benefits, are still in the developmental phase and require coordinated efforts and careful policy planning to mitigate risks. AI Technologies, with their data-mining capabilities, have the potential to uncover hidden patterns of corruption, but further exploration is needed. In essence, these technologies can be valuable assets in the fight against corruption, but their effectiveness depends on a range of factors, and continuous research and evaluation are essential to harness their full potential and address associated risks.

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