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Law-Meddlers

DO NOT IGNORE COMMENTS ON DECISIONS, SAYS BAR COUNCIL

PETALING JAYA, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Bar Council today said comments over recent decisions of Malaysian courts should not be ignored or brushed aside by castigating those who make them as meddlers.

Bar Council president R.R. Chelvarajah said of late, a number of decisions of local courts given in a number of high-profile cases had been adversely commented on both locally and internationally.

"They (such comments) should be seriously considered with a view to taking remedial measures as may be required," he said in his remarks at the opening of the 12th Commonwealth Law Conference here.

Chelvarajah said nothing was more debilitating to a nation than to have a judiciary which did not command the respect and confidence of the public.

He said one principle of common law which lawyers must not allow to be eroded was the independence of the judiciary.

"On this principle, judges are not the servants of the government; they are the servants of justice.

"And, it is their function to see that justice is done not only between individuals but also between individuals and the State," he said.

The four-day conference, organised by the Commonwealth Lawyers' Association and the Bar Council, was opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Chelvarajah said recent decisions in high-profile cases led many lawyers and judges from a number of Commonwealth countries to question the wisdom of holding the conference in Kuala Lumpur.

He said the Bar Council of Malaysia saw the issue in a different way.

"We feel strongly that it is because of these present circumstances that distinguished lawyers and eminent judges of the Commonwealth should come together to join us here to discuss openly and make known our common concerns and views," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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