

## **BN MPs revive talk of an alternative Bar Council**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Sept 24, 2013**

**By Ram Anand**

PARLIAMENT A group of BN MPs today revived talk of setting up an alternative organisation to the Bar Council, after accusing the council of being overly critical of the government in the past.

Vocal backbencher Bung Mokhtar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan), as expected, led the BN MPs in urging for the new organisation of lawyers, saying the Bar Council was irrelevant and often served the interests of the opposition.

"Every time we criticise the Bar Council, the opposition reacts like it has been bitten by ants!" Bung Mokhtar said, claiming that the council was filled with opposition members.

"We need a new organisation so that we can give the young lawyers a choice. They need a choice. This is freedom of speech," he further said.

NONE However, de facto Law Minister Nancy Shukri (right) insisted that no new organisation will be set up as an alternative, saying that lawyers unhappy with the Bar can set up their own associations.

"But there will be only one Bar. This is how it is," Nancy said.

The argument was put forward when Nancy was wrapping up debate on amendments to the Legal Profession Act 2012.

This idea of an alternative to the Bar Council was mooted in the middle of last year by Nancy's predecessor, Nazri Abdul Aziz, in reaction to Bar Council's EGM resolution condemning the high-handedness of the police in dealing with protesters during the Bersih 3.0 rally in April last year.

'A limit even to freedom of speech'

The idea appeared to have petered off after some time, but Bung Mokhtar and his colleagues seem to be still in favour of an alternative body being set up.

Others who joined Bung Mokhtar's call were Shamsul Anuar Nasarah (BN-Lenggong) and Datu Nasrun Datu Mansur (BN-Silam), both of whom said the

Bar Council's past statements appeared to be opposition-friendly.

"There is a limit even to freedom of speech. If your child in the house scolds the father, there is a limit," Bung Mokhtar said.

However, Nancy said dissenting voices from within the Bar Council were the "individual opinions" of the lawyers who made such a statements and that this was not reflective of the organisation as a whole.

"I know sometimes it's seen as though the Bar Council is saying those things. So I hope the next time the individuals clarify that they are making the statements in their individual capacities," she said.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/241976>