

**Chin's allegations: Dr M to respond 'in due time'**  
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Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he will refrain from commenting on the explosive allegations of a High Court judge that the former premier had interfered with the judiciary.  
MCPX

In stunning allegations made in open court, judge Ian Chin said he was threatened by Mahathir over high-profile cases, one involving a close associate of the then-leader.

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In a brief response to the allegations, Mahathir wrote in his blog that he would not comment on them for now and would do so "in due time".

"However, I am quite curious about what Ian Chin considers as 'veiled threat'. Perhaps he could be more specific as his allegations are very serious," added Mahathir.

According to Chin, judges were sent to an indoctrination 'boot camp' and threatened with dismissal to pressure them into making pro-government decisions.

"Now, though he is no longer the prime minister and so no longer able to carry out his threat to remove judges, the coalition party that he led is still around," he said.

ian chin ian hn chin judge  
Chin (right) made the allegations before hearing a dispute on Monday over results of March general elections in Sarawak's parliamentary seat of Sarikei.

He said he was targeted by Mahathir after refusing to award "astronomical" payouts in two libel cases in 1997, while a judge who agreed with the then-premier's views was promoted to the Federal Court.

Afterwards, Chin reportedly said he was packed off to a five-day boot camp with selected judges and judicial officers.

It was without any doubt "an attempt to indoctrinate those attending the boot camp to hold the view that the government interest as being more important than all else when we are considering our judgement," he said.

Chin also said he was aware of other judges who were told how they should rule on particular cases.

**Bar Council: Allegations startling and damning**

Bar Council president Ambiga Sreenivasan called for an inquiry into the allegations, which she said were "both startling and damning".

"Judges, both present and past, must be encouraged to come forward and provide information on any such instances of interference so that further action may be taken," she told Malaysiakini.

Chin's allegations add to the pall cast over the country's judiciary by a recent royal

commission into a sensational Mahathir-era video clip - dubbed the Lingam tape - that showed a top lawyer brokering judicial appointments with the help of politicians.

The commission found in May that there was evidence of an "insidious" conspiracy to influence the appointment of judges, and the government promised to investigate those implicated.

Mahathir has challenged the authorities to charge him.

"I want them to charge me in court. Only then will I have the opportunity to expose more conflicts faced by the judges, including those who have implicated me," he said.

Meanwhile, an aide to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi told AFP that the premier declined to comment on the issue.

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