

**Why no action on judge's revelations, asks Bar Council**  
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Malaysian Bar president S Ambiga has questioned whether it was right of the government to not act on the shocking revelations made by Sabah and Sarawak High Court judge Ian Chin. MCPX

ambiga sreenevasan 030507 bar council In a statement today, Ambiga stressed that inaction was not an option by the government because this would be against the interest of the public and judges "who work tirelessly, honestly and quietly to uphold their oaths of office".

"Are we just going to ignore what the judges have said and pretend the incidents never happened?"

"Are we to allow this matter to be swept under the carpet without giving all those concerned a fair chance to be heard?"

"Should we not be alarmed by the chilling disclosure of a 'boot camp' which strikes at the very heart of the independence of the judiciary and separation of powers?"

"Should we not be interested to find out if there were any other improprieties and what we can learn from the mistakes of the past?" she raised.

She was responding to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and de facto law minister Zaid Ibrahim's refusal to probe into allegations of executive interference into the judiciary.

judge ian hn chin ding kuong hiing wong hua seh and sarikei parliament election judgement 100608 Chin on Monday sent shock waves through the legal fraternity when he implicated former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad and former chief justice Eusoff Chin in having interfered with judicial decisions.

The senior judge said Mahathir had issued a veiled threat that judges could be removed if they issued rulings against his administration.

While the Bar Council has called for thorough investigations into Chin's allegations, other quarters have remained silent on this.

A complaints mechanism needed

Ambiga opined that despite the fatigue and fear being felt by judges on the judicial quagmire, everybody should find the strength to deal with this issue.

She said that the people owed it to those who have shown the courage to come forward to create an environment so they and others can serve without fear or favour.

"We must all appreciate that it takes courage to step forward to reveal the misdeeds or improprieties.

"To do so is to risk one's career but such revelations are the driving force behind reform and accountability," she stressed.

Ambiga noted that the Judicial Appointments Commission mooted by the government should now include a mechanism for judges to complain against any party that seeks to interfere with the performance of their duties.

She then called for investigations to be carried out if potential offences are disclosed, a fact-finding effort, a royal commission to investigate and resolve judicial issues, mechanism for public and judges to make complaints and all parties be given a fair opportunity to state their case.

The judiciary has come under close scrutiny since a video recording was made public last year, showing lawyer VK Lingam brokering the appointment of 'friendly' judges with then chief justice Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim.

A royal commission of inquiry confirmed the authenticity of the clip and recommended action against six key individuals including Mahathir, and the creation of a judicial appointments commission.

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