

# Appointment of judges decided by Constitution, PM reminds

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**PUTRAJAYA:** Reiterating his stance on non-interference in the judiciary, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says judicial decisions are made by the courts and should not be politicised.

The Prime Minister also said that all appointments and extensions of service of judges must follow procedures as outlined in the Federal Constitution.

"If one understands the Constitution, the process is clear.

"There's a commission, there's the Prime Minister and there's the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

"If you look at the recent appointments, the list of candidates is submitted to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and then brought to the Conference of Rulers for discussion.

"These procedures must be followed," he said at the Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly.

"I believe that when institutions like the judiciary are politicised, decisions can give the impression of betrayal," he said.

"I've heard the issues being raised ... but I have never inter-

fered in judicial matters.

"Whatever decisions are made (by the courts), those are theirs, but even that is being politicised," he said.

The Prime Minister lamented the public's tendency to interpret judicial decisions based on their own political leanings.

He cited recent high-profile cases, including those involving Muar MP Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman and former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"We must respect the judges and the decisions they make.

"I notice people have double standards. They support a DNAA (discharge not amounting to an acquittal) in one case but reject it (in another).

"We can't be like that.

"We must remember to uphold (the integrity of the judiciary), not follow political preferences," he said.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Bar said the government should make it known whether Tun Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat's tenure as Chief Justice will be extended or a new appointment made in

accordance with the Federal Constitution and Judicial Appointments Commission process.

Its president Mohamad Ezri Abdul Wahab said that with Tengku Maimun's retirement due today, the unknown status of her successor reflects "a failure in institutional responsibility".

"This vacuum at the very apex of the judiciary is as absurd as it is dangerous," he said.

Tengku Maimun turns 66 today, the mandatory retirement age for judges.