

# Celebrating the Anniversary of Legal Aid in Malaysia

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Legal Aid in Malaysia

Broadcast live via Zoom from  
Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Wisma Badan Peguam Malaysia  
2 Leboh Pasar Besar, 50050 Kuala Lumpur

27 Nov 2021 (Saturday) | 8:30 am to 12:45 pm

The year 2020 marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of legal aid services by lawyers in Malaysia. Legal aid services started from humble beginnings in 1980 by a small number of lawyers at a fishing village in Bayan Lepas, Penang. The lawyers formed the Penang Legal Advisory Centre ("PLAC"), which operated out of a community library and coffee shop, and its first office was a dilapidated wooden shack by the main road. PLAC was primarily involved in dealing with problems faced by workers in Penang.

Then in 1982, a small group of lawyers from Kuala Lumpur set up a legal aid office in a small room in the High Court premises in Kuala Lumpur.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Malaysian Bar held on 4 Feb 1983, a resolution was adopted to add an annual levy of RM100 for legal aid into the Malaysian Bar payments required under the Legal Profession Act 1976. Following this resolution, the Bar Council began to manage a Legal Aid Fund in order to run its own legal aid scheme, which is funded by the RM100 annual levy paid by Members of the Bar.

The Bar Council Legal Aid Scheme was established under sections 42(1)(g) and (h) of the Legal Profession Act 1976, which provides that: "*The purpose of the Malaysian Bar shall be— ... (g) to protect and assist the*

*public in all matters touching ancillary or incidental to the law; (h) to make provision for or assist in the promotion of a scheme whereby impecunious persons may be represented by advocates and solicitors; ...*".

Currently, the Bar Council has a total of 15 Legal Aid Centres throughout Malaysia.

We are pleased to announce that we will be celebrating this historic event on 27 Nov 2021, at the Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium. Save the date, block your calendars, and join us virtually to celebrate this event!



### Programme

08:30 am Registration and Refreshments

09:15 am Opening Remarks by **A G Kalidas**, *President, Malaysian Bar*

09:30 am Forum | **Pro Bono Legal Aid – Why Bother about the Poor, the Oppressed and the Dispossessed**

- Panellists:
  - ◆ **YA Datuk Vazeer Alam bin Mydin Meera**, *Judge, Court of Appeal*
  - ◆ **Dato' Haji Sulaiman Abdullah**, *Co-Deputy Chairperson, Bar Council National Legal Aid Committee; Past President of the Malaysian Bar (2000–2001)*
  - ◆ **Suraiya Mustafa Kamal**, *Deputy Director General (Civil), Legal Aid Department*
  - ◆ **Harleen Kaur Tarjeet Singh**, *Member, Bar Council*
- Moderator:
  - ◆ **S Gunasegaran**, *former Chairperson, National Legal Aid Committee; Member of the Bar*

11:00 am Presentation of "Legal Aid Champion" Certificates

11:30 am "Down Memory Lane" – Poetry reading by **Cecil Rajendra**, *a pioneer of legal aid in Malaysia; Member of the Bar* (music accompaniment provided by the BRYL-Cream Quartet)

12:30 pm Closing Remarks (pre-recorded)  
by **YBhg Tan Sri Idrus Harun**, *Attorney General of Malaysia*

12:45 pm End

*For safety reasons and to comply with the Standard Operating Procedures ("SOPs") issued by the National Security Council, physical attendance at the Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium is limited to pre-invited guests only.*