



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



**BERNARD SCOTT**

Almost a year has passed by in a blink of the eyes since the last AGM.

It is indeed a privilege and honour to be elected as the Chairman of the Selangor Bar Committee at the last AGM of the Selangor Bar held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

Prior to that, I had served in the Selangor Bar Committee in various capacities.

I served as a Co-Chair of the Civil Practice & Court Liaison Sub-Committee for four (4) terms beginning 2015 whilst also serving as Honorary Secretary for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 terms. I had also served as a volunteer lawyer with the Legal Aid Centre Selangor since 2006 and in the Chambering Pupils Affairs Sub-Committee from 2010 until 2014, which Sub-Committee was ably chaired by the late Madam Tejindarpal Kaur.

In my role as the Chairman of the Bar Committee, I worked closely with Mr. Alvin Neo, who was appointed as the Honorary Secretary at the first meeting of the Selangor Bar Committee at the beginning of this Committee's term in office.

I am ably supported by a Committee of twelve (12) members who each chair or co-chair a Sub-Committee of the Selangor Bar.

As Chairman of the State Bar, I also have the privilege and honour to serve in the Bar Council. In the Bar Council, I work and collaborate closely with our Selangor Bar Representative, Mr. AG Kalidas.

The reports of the Bar Representative and each of the eleven (11) Sub-Committee are in this Annual Report. I do not propose to repeat the contents of their respective reports here but suffice for me to say that the reports does not truly reflect the hard work and effort put in by each of my Committee members and their respective Sub-Committees throughout the year.

After almost a period of four (4) years of the Selangor Bar Committee dealing with the purchase of the additional two (2) adjacent buildings, renovating, refurbishing and refitting all three (3) buildings, this year was to be a year of fresh beginnings and moving away from the focus on our State Bar buildings.



I had made it a mission as Chairman to empower each of the Committee Members for this term by giving them the freedom of space, time-frame and flexibility to plan and carry out the events and activities of their respective sub-committees for this term, which effectively commenced after the last AGM on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to this year's AGM which is being held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

It was also a mission which I shared with my Committee Members at our first monthly Committee Meeting that I aspired for the Selangor Bar to reach out to all members of the Selangor Bar especially those practicing in the outlying areas of Selangor.

To that end, the "Meet Us & Tell Us" events which have been in place since the term 2016/17 was the platform for the Committee to meet members of the Bar practicing in both civil and criminal areas of law at the courts located throughout the State of Selangor.

Besides meeting members at the Shah Alam Court Complex, Klang and New Town at Petaling Jaya, the Chair of both the Civil and Criminal Practice and Court Liaison Sub-Committees and I also visited the courts located at Sungai Besar and Kuala Selangor, Sepang and Kuala Kubu Bharu to reach out and meet members to get to know the local issues pertaining to practice such as e-filing and matters of difficulties with the local court administration.

Moving on, after a lapse of more than four (4) years, a team building weekend for Selangor Bar Committee, the staff of the Selangor Bar secretariat together with the staff of the Legal Aid Centre, Selangor took place at Avillion in Port Dickson on 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It was long overdue event to build up the camaraderie, foster and build up mutual trust, teamwork and a sense of belonging among the Committee Members and the staff of both the secretariat and the Legal Aid Centre who spend a lot of time together working for the benefit of members of the Selangor Bar. A word of thanks to Mr. Alvin Neo for taking care of the logistics and arrangements for the weekend. This is an event which is highly recommended to be held annually.

I now wish to highlight a number events which are of significance to members in this term.

The first was the hugely successful Criminal Law Forum held at the Selangor Bar auditorium on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019. This conference was organized by the Criminal Practice and Court Liaison Sub-Committee helmed by Mr. M K Thas. The distinguished panel of Speakers and presenters included retired Federal Court Judge, Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram, Tuan Hj. Hisyam Teh Poh Teik, Encik. Salim Bashir, Mr. M M Athimulan, Encik. Siraj Jalil and Tuan Amidon Adnan.

The next event was the Human Rights Day which was celebrated for the first time in Selangor Bar on the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at our Auditorium. Special thanks to both Ms. Ajeet Kaur and Mr. Yohendra Nadarajan, Co-Chairs of the Constitutional Law, Human Rights & Environment Sub-Committee and their team members. The Chief Judge of Sabah & Sarawak took time off His Lordship's busy diary to grace this event. The report of that Sub-Committee is in this Annual Report.



Moving on, sports is an integral part of the activities at the Bar. The Selangor Bar has proudly participated in all sports events organised interstate and at the national level. We also have members representing the Malaysian Bar in the Bar games with the Singapore lawyers.

In January 2020, the Selangor Bar team retained the KL-Selangor Bar “Lall Singh Muker” Challenge Trophy for the second year running despite having a team of senior sports participants. The Selangor Bar Committee made a decision to provide training allowance to each team at the request for the participants and convenors and that decision has helped to motivate the teams to go all out for Selangor Bar and the results speak for themselves. A word of thanks to Mr. Eugene Roy Joseph, the Chair of the Sports Sub-Committee. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the sportsmen and sports women who have proudly represented the Selangor Bar for their sacrifices in training and giving their best in the games they participated. The Selangor Bar is indeed proud of each one of you.

A two (2) days Civil Law Conference would have been just concluded by the time this report reaches members of the Selangor Bar. This is an event undertaken by the Civil Practice and Court Liaison Sub-Committee, chaired by Ms. Kokila Vaani and supported by her team members. The list of Speakers is indeed impressive. The Chief Judge of Malaya has graciously agreed to officiate the opening of this conference. Once again, the Chief Judge of Sabah & Sarawak will be in attendance together with Judges from the Federal Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court and retired Judges of the Court of Appeal together with other prominent civil law practitioners.

With the good, there were also issues not so good to deal with that arose in this term.

An area of focus which I took a personal interest during the term in office was the basic issues affecting practice and etiquette. To that end, one of the first circular issued this term was concerning touting “SBC/CIR/012/2019” dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The issue of touting may not be seen to be rampant in all areas of practice but the Bar must deal with these issues without fear or favour when they arise and this Committee took the lead to tackle this issue head on with the issuance of the circular.

Another issue of interest and which was emphasized by the Bench to the Selangor Bar Committee concerned the dress code or attire for lawyers in Chambers and in Open Court and on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019, a circular, SBC/CIR/100/2019 was issued reproducing the circular issued by the Federal Court dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2000 regarding the dress code for Advocates & Solicitors attending court.

At the meeting of the Selangor Bar Committee and the Managing Judge of Selangor together with the High Court Judges and Registrars of the High Court which was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, both these issues were highlighted and discussed.

Another issue of concern of the Bench is the failure of lawyers to properly address the presider in court. To that end, during the introductory talk held for pupils in chambers every month and in the booklet specially prepared for pupils, such matters are given due emphasis.



The Bar must seek to assist members to get the basics right at the very start of their practice and issues pertaining to etiquette, dress code and the manner of addressing the Registrars, Magistrates, Judges and Appellate Judges must be taught as these are not dealt with at most if not, all the law schools.

With that and before I conclude my report, I wish to extend my sincere thanks and gratefulness to the Selangor Bar Committee Members, the members of the Sub-Committees, the secretariat staff and all members of the Selangor Bar for their support and encouragement and hard work put in throughout this term.

I must mention that each of them sacrificed their own time away from their own busy legal practice and family or leisure time and even money in some instances, for the betterment of the State Bar and for that I am honoured and privileged to serve the State Bar together with each and every one of them.

I sincerely wish the incoming Committee the very best in all that they will undertake in the new term of office.

Report submitted by:

**Bernard Scott**  
**Chairman,**  
**Selangor Bar Committee**