



KUCHING BRANCH

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2023

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ADVOCATES ASSOCIATION OF SARAWAK
KUCHING BRANCH
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
(ANNUAL DELEGATES CONFERENCE 2023)

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(Period: 10th December 2022 to 9th December 2023)

Fellow Delegates,

This report covers the activities and events of Kuching Branch which transpired throughout the year are set out under the various headings appearing below.

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1. BRANCH'S SUB-COMMITTEES

The following sub-committees have been set up in the 1st Branch Committee meeting since this committee took office on 22-11-2022:

- (i) Civil Procedure – Mr. Desmond Sahathevan
- (ii) Criminal Procedure – Mr. Daniel Ling
- (iii) Law Awareness – Ms. Catherine David
- (iv) Young Lawyers & Sports – Mr. Alan Bong
- 40 (v) YBGK & Human Rights – Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah & Mr. Bartholomew Lopez
- (vi) Bar Room & Secretariat – Mr. Benny Zaidy bin Jalil, Mr. Nicholas Wung & Mr. Liew Tang Chieh
- (vii) Website & IT – Mr. Emeric Teo & Mr. Nicholas Wung
- (viii) Native Customary Rights – Mr. Bartholomew Lopez
- (ix) Dinners / Annual Dinner – Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah & Mr. Liew Tang Chieh
- (x) Informal Get Togethers – Mr. Liew Tang Chieh & Mr. Alan Bong
- (xi) Industrial & Labour Law – Mr. Liew Tang Chieh
- 50 (xii) Conveyancing & Corporate – Mr. Emeric Teo (with Mr. Louis Ng)
- (xiii) Syariah – Mr. Benny Zaidy bin Jalil & Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah
- (xiv) Continuing Legal Education – Mr. Desmond Sahathevan & Ms. Catherine David
- (xv) Etiquette & Advocacy Courses – Mr. Desmond Sahathevan

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2. ANNUAL DELEGATES CONFERENCE 2022

The Annual Delegates Conference was held on Saturday, 10th December 2022 at Auditorium at Ultimate Professional Centre, Kuching. The following were elected (except the post of Vice Presidents are automatically appointed from the Chairman of all Branches) to the Central Committee for 2022-2024 :-

70	President	:	Mr. Gurvir Singh Sandhu (Miri)
	Immediate Past President	:	Mr. Antonio Sim (Miri)
	Vice Presidents	:	Mr. Liew Tang Chieh (Kuching)
			Mr. Tonny Hii Yii Yik (Sibu)
			Mr. Ma Seong Yuin (Bintulu)
			Mr. Lee Jin Wen (Miri)
	Honorary Secretary	:	Mr. David Teo Seng Wee (Miri)
	Assistant Secretary	:	Mr. Christine Lim (Sibu)
	Honorary Treasurer	:	Mr. Timothy Lim Teng (Sibu)
	Assistant Treasurer	:	Mr. Eric Lau Lian Jing (Bintulu)
	Committee Members	:	Mr. Janting Antalai (Bintulu)
			Mr. Desmond Sahathevan (Kuching)
80			Mr. Benny Zaidy bin Jalil (Kuching)
			Mr. William Ting Siew Chon (Sibu)
			Mr. Bartholomew Lopez (Kuching)
			Mr. Boston Ho Teck Howe (Sibu)

3. TRIPARTITE MEETING 2023 HELD IN MIRI

90 A Tripartite Meeting was held on the 12th January 2023 @ 2.30pm at Pullman Hotel Miri among Advocates Association of Sarawak, SLS & BC counterparts and various matters which concern legal practice in Malaysia as a whole were discussed.

4. OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR OF THE HIGH COURT OF SABAH AND SARAWAK 2023 HELD IN MIRI

100 The Opening of the Legal Year of the High Court of Sabah and Sarawak (“OLY”) 2023 was held on 13th January 2023 in Miri and the Gala Dinner was held later at night at Pullman Hotel Miri. Both the OLY 2023 and Gala Dinner were well attended by Kuching Branch members.

5. MEETING WITH YB RAMKARPAL SINGH

110 A meeting was held between Central Committee and YB Ramkarpal Singh, deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reforms) in the afternoon of 13-1-2023 where various matters concerning legal practice in Sarawak were discussed, among others, air conditioning problem at Kuching court.

6. YB RAMKARPAL SINGH'S VISIT OF KUCHING COURT ON 20TH JANUARY 2023

120 On 20-1-23, YB Ramkarpal visited Kuching Court and announced that as a temporary measure, each court room in Kuching will be installed with one unit 4 horsepower air conditioning unit immediately after Chinese New Year.

7. MEETING WITH MEET PROF STEVE NGO, THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BEIHAI ASIA INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (BAIAC) SINGAPORE

130 On 8-3-2023, a meeting was held between Prof Steve Ngo, the President and Executive Director of BAIAC Singapore and Kuching Branch Committee.

We were enlightened by Prof Steve Ngo about the Beihai Asia International Arbitration Centre (BAIAC) set up in Singapore and more importantly how Singapore handles Arbitration and ADR (Alternate Dispute Resolution).

8. MEETING WITH THE CHIEF JUDGE OF SABAH AND SARAWAK ON 6TH APRIL, 2023

140 On 6th April 2023, a meeting was held between Central Committee and the right Honourable Tan Sri Dato' Abdul Rahman Bin Sebli where various issues faced by the members and the association were raised.

9. MEETING WITH YB DATUK HJH SHARIFAH HASIDAH, YB DATO SRI WAN JUNAIDI, DATO SUDRA RAJOO AND SARAWAK STATE ATTORNEY-GENERAL DATO SRI TALAT MAHMOOD ON THE SETTING UP OF ASIAN INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (AIAC) SARAWAK

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On 12th May 2023, Upon invitation by Deputy Minister in the Premier's Department (Law, MA63 and State-Federal Relations), Mr President and myself attended the meeting on behalf of Advocates Association of Sarawak with YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah, YB Dato Sri Wan Junaidi, Sarawak State Attorney-General Dato Sri Talat Mahmood and AIAC team lead by Dato Sudra Rajoo on the setting up of Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC) Sarawak.

160 We were briefed by YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah that the premier has given his green light for the AIAC Sarawak Chapter. AAS will play a role in the advisory committee which decides on the direction AIAC Sarawak takes. The state government has earmarked the textile museum building as the centre here and AIAC will extend a contract for the government's consideration. YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah has requested AAS to consider allowing foreign arbitrators to take up arbitration in Sarawak and allow some give and take. We have informed her that we would seek member's input on this matter.

170 **10. CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

"INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION"

180 On 23rd June 2023, Kuching Branch and Beihai Asia International Arbitration Centre (BAIAC) Singapore jointly organised a full day seminar on "Introduction to International Commercial Arbitration" at Ultimate Professional Centre and we are honoured to have Professor Steve Ngo to be our speaker. The seminar was well attended by members.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow committee members for their efforts in organising and disseminating information in relation all programmes / talks / seminars.

190 **"ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES" – COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NATIVE CUSTOMARY LAW IN CONNECTION TO THE USE OF LAND IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES"**

On 20 July 2023, Kuching Branch and The American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) jointly organised a talk on "Access to justice for indigenous communities – comparative study of Native Customary Law in connection to the use of land in their respective countries" from 2:00pm to 5:00pm at Meritin Hotel, Kuching and we had 3 speakers for the talk, i.e. Mr

Brent Leonhard from United States and Mr Simon Siah and Mr John Jussem from Sarawak Bar. The talk was well attended by members.

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11. WELCOMING DINNER FOR CHIEF JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT IN SABAH AND SARAWAK, YANG AMAT ARIF TAN SRI DATO' ABDUL RAHMAN BIN SEBLI

On 1st August 2023, Kuching Branch organised a welcoming dinner for Chief Judge of the High Court in Sabah and Sarawak, Yang Amat Arif Tan Sri Dato' Abdul Rahman Bin Sebli at the Waterfront Hotel and the dinner was well attended by members.

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I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow committee members for helping me to organise the dinner.

12. INTER-PROFESSIONAL GAMES 2023

From 20th August 2023 to 24th October 2023, the Inter-Professional Games ('IPG') 2023 was held in Kuching between 8 teams comprising of 11 professional bodies. There were 5 events held, namely Darts, Badminton, Golf, Futsal and Bowling. The overall champions of the IPG 2023 was the Institution of Engineers Malaysia, Sarawak Branch, while the Advocates Association of Sarawak, Kuching Branch, came in 2nd place.

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The IPG 2023 was capped off with a Closing Dinner held on 13th October 2023 at the Hornbill Restaurant, Sarawak Club.

Congratulations to IEM Sarawak and well done to our participants from the Branch. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our Sports sub-committee chaired by Mr Alan Bong with assistance from Mr Desmond Sahathevan and Mr. Emeric Teo as well as all sports convenors for their efforts.

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13. TRIPARTITE BAR GAMES 2023

From 12th October 2023 to 14th October 2023, the Tripartite Bar Games ('TBG') 2023 was held in Bintulu among the Malaysian Bar, the Sabah Law Society and the Advocates Association of Sarawak. There were 8 competitive events held, namely Football, Futsal, Volleyball, Badminton, Basketball, Cross-Country,

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Darts and Golf. The overall champions of the TBG 2023 was the Malaysian Bar, while the AAS came in 2nd place .

Bintulu Branch, as hosts, organised a Welcoming Dinner on 12th October 2023 at Kelab Kidurong Bintulu and a Gala Dinner on 14th October 2023 at the Rooftop, Goldenbay Hotel.

250 I would like to congratulate the Malaysian Bar on becoming overall winners and express my thanks to Bintulu Branch for being excellent hosts and organisers. Again, well done to our participants. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all sports convenors for their efforts, and also to Mr. President and the Central Committee for approving and allocating funds for our teams to prepare and participate in the TBG 2023.

14. INFORMAL GET TOGETHERS

260 Kuching Branch continues to organise the Informal Get Together without charging pupil who attends this event.

- (1) Informal Get Together – 24th February 2023 Friday at Perdu Bistro
5:30pm – 8:30pm
Speaker Louis Ng on “Conveyancing Practice – Part 1”
- (2) Informal Get Together – 31st March 2023 Friday at Perdu Bistro
5:30pm – 8:30pm
Speaker Louis Ng on “Conveyancing Practice – Part 2”
- 270 (3) Informal Get Together – 26th May 2023 Friday at Lola Kuching
5:30pm – 8:30pm
Speaker Abdul Rahman on “Criminal Law Practice”
- (4) Informal Get Together – 8th September 2023 Friday at Perdu Bistro
5:30pm – 8:30pm
Speaker Louis Ng on “Conveyancing Practice – Part 3”
- (5) Informal Get Together – 25th September 2023 Friday at Perdu Bistro
5:30pm – 8:30pm
280 Speaker K.A. Ramu on “How to Conduct a Full Criminal Trial”
- (6) Informal Get Together – 27th October 2023 Friday at Perdu Bistro
5:30pm – 8:30pm

Speaker Satinder Singh Sandhu on “Practical Issues Concerning Adjudication (CIPAA) in Malaysia”

290 The Informal Get Together were well attended by members and pupils and it enables members and pupils to get to know each other. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the speakers for their time and effort to share their knowledge with our members as well as Mr. Alan Bong for assisting me in co-ordinating our monthly informal get togethers.

15. KUCHING LANDS & SURVEYS REGISTRY'S MOVE OF CONTINUING THE OUTSTANDING NUMBERS FROM THE PREVIOUS DAY EFFECTIVE FROM 3-11-2023

300 Following the instructions from the Director of Lands & Surveys Datu Abdullah Bin Julaihi, the Kuching Lands & Surveys registry changed its queuing system by continuing the outstanding numbers from the previous day effective from 3-11-2023. I have informed Datu Abdullah that we welcome and look forward to the implementation of this new system as we trust this will be a fairer system to everyone who has been long queuing there since early morning for submission of their instruments at Kuching Lands & Surveys Dept.

310 **16. MEETING WITH PROFESSOR DR. JASON CHUAH, DEAN OF FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITI MALAYA**

On 9th November 2023, Mr President and myself met the Dean of Faculty of Law, Universiti Malaya Professor Dr Jason Chuah at Lepau and explored working together to set up ADR courses for Sarawak advocates who have yet to take up these courses in order to be qualified to take up ADR cases.

320 **17. VISITING OF PRISON AND HENRY GURNEY SCHOOL AT PUNCAK BORNEO**

On 15th November 2023, Kuching Branch organised visiting of Prison and Henry Gurney School at Puncak Borneo and it was well participated by members.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah binti Awang Hipni for organising this visit.

330 **18. YBGK TRAINING**

On 18th November 2023, Kuching Branch organised the Yayasan Bantuan Guaman Kebangsaan ('YBGK') Training for Part 3 – Criminal Trial Advocacy at the Ultimate Professional Centre Auditorium and it was well attended by members.

340 The Branch continues to organise YBGK training sessions, particularly in light of the pledges taken by newly admitted advocates at their call to the Bar. A word of thanks to Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah binti Awang Hipni for heading our YBGK committee.

19. JEMPUTAN MENGHADIRI DIALOG TAHUNAN SURUHANJAYA SYARIKAT MALAYSIA ("SSM") 2023

350 Kuching Branch Chairman was invited to have a dialogue session with SSM at Imperial Hotel Kuching on 23 November 2023 and Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiah binti Awang Hipni attended and represented the Branch Chairman.

20. KUCHING BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Branch Committee Meetings were held on 9th December 2022, 15th February 2023, 20th October 2023 and 21st November 2023.

360 **21. OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR OF THE HIGH COURT OF SABAH AND SARAWAK 2024**

The date for OLY 2024 has been set on 19th January 2024 and it will be held at Sabah International Convention Centre (SICC), Kota Kinabalu. I encourage members to support this event by joining in the functions as well as taking up advertisements in the souvenir magazine.

370 **22. NUMBER OF KUCHING BRANCH MEMBERS AND KUCHING LEGAL FIRM**

As of 8-11-2023, Kuching Branch has 780 members and there are 217 legal firms in Kuching, Padawan, Samarahan, Serian and Bau.

23. CLOSING REMARKS AND APPRECIATION

380 In closing, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to my fellow Kuching Branch Committee Members, namely Mr. Desmond Sahathevan, Mr. Benny Zaidy bin Jalil, Mr. Nicholas Wung, Mr. Bartholomew Lopez, Mr. Alan Bong, Mr. Daniel Ling, Mr. Emeric Teo, Ms. Dayangku Sa'adiyah binti Awang Hipni, Ms. Catherine David and all our members, friends and contributors for your kind cooperation, time and commitment to Kuching Branch and the Association in all our activities and programmes.

If there have been any shortcomings, as Branch Chairman, I accept full responsibility and I apologise for the same.

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Thank you.

Dated 5th December 2023



LIEW TANG CHIEH
Branch Chairman 2022-2024
Advocates Association of Sarawak (Kuching Branch)

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