

**PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ADDRESS**  
**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE TUN DATO' SERI ARIFIN BIN ZAKARIA**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE INNS OF COURT MALAYSIA**  
**10TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER & BENCHING CEREMONY**  
**THE MAJESTIC HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR**  
**27 JUNE 2026**

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**Bismillahirrahmanirrahim**

**Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,**

1. Salam Sejahtera and Salam Malaysia Madani. A very good evening.
  - His Excellency Tun Pehin Sri Dr. Haji Wan Junaidi bin Tuanku Jaafar, Governor of Sarawak;
  - Her Most Gracious Toh Puan Datuk Patinggi Fauziah binti Mohd Sanusi;
  - YAB Datuk Amar Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia;
  - YABhg. Datin Amar Hajah Ruziah binti Mohd Tahir;
  - YABhg. Toh Puan Robiah Abdul Kadir;
  - YAA Tun Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh, Rt. Hon. Chief Justice of Malaysia;

- YABhg. Toh Puan Intan Baizura binti Abdul Wahab;
- YABhg. Tun Zaki Tun Azmi, 12<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of Malaysia;
- YABhg. Tun Md Raus bin Sharif, 14th Chief Justice of Malaysia;
- YABhg. Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, 16th Chief Justice of Malaysia;
- YBhg. Dato' Senator Awang Bemee bin Ali Basah, President of the Senate;
- YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform);
- YB Puan Hannah Yeoh Tseow Suan, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories);
- The Right Honourable Datuk Seri Abu Bakar bin Jais, President of the Court of Appeal;
- The Right Honourable Datuk Hajjah Azizah binti Haji Nawawi, Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak;
- YDH Commissioner Datuk Mohamad Zainal Abdullah, Sarawak Commissioner of Police;
- YBhg. Dato' Brenndon Keith Soh, Sabah State Attorney-General;

- Mr. Anand Raj, President of the Malaysian Bar;
  - H.E. Noriyuki Shikata, the Ambassador of Japan;
  - H.E. Marta Laura Gabrieloni, the Ambassador of the Argentine Republic;
  - H.E. Jodi Robinson, the High Commissioner of Canada;
  - United States Chargé d'Affaires, David H. Gamble;
  - India Chargé d'Affaires, Hitesh Rajpal;
  - Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Mr Lin Shiguang;
  - Honourable Judges of the Federal Court, Court of Appeal and High Court
  - Our Deputy President, Office Bearers and Executive Committee members, founding and present;
  - Senior members of the Bar, legal academics, corporate counsel and other distinguished guests.
2. On behalf of the Executive Committee and the members of the Inns of Court Malaysia, it gives me immense pleasure to welcome all of you to this very special evening as we celebrate the **10th Anniversary of the Inns of Court Malaysia.**

3. Do read the details on the birth of ICM and our origins in my Presidential Address in the “*ICM Decennial Chronicle*” that you all will be scanning via a QR code.
4. We began with a simple but meaningful aspiration shortly before my retirement to create **a home for the whole spectrum of law professionals.**
5. A place where judges, lawyers, legal academics, corporate counsel, students and members of the legal fraternity could meet, not as opponents across the courtroom, but as colleagues united by a common commitment to civility, justice, professionalism and integrity.
6. Ten years later, I am humbled to say that this aspiration has become a living, breathing, and thriving reality.

## **CIVILITY**

7. The term “civility” is fascinating – one where ICM seeks to nurture and cultivate as part of its mutual learning process, dining together in such august company.
8. I am minded by the words of His Royal Highness Sultan Azlan Shah, who had this to say at the occasion of a speech delivered by His Royal Highness in UKM to law students back in August 1997, in a paper titled “*The New Millennium: Challenges and Responsibilities*”. Even though delivered twenty nine years ago, this stark reminder is

timeless; the essence of civility holds true to the fabric of law, the very tapestry of justice.

*“Civility is an essential feature of a civil society, an indispensable ingredient of an ordered society under law. Each of you must endeavour to be a paradigm of civility. The law is a healing profession; “to make whole” is more than a term of art. It is a standard of behaviour inspired by idealism and compassion, informed by rules of fairness.”*

9. This evening presents a truly rare and historic occasion. It is not every day, it may well be unprecedented to witness **five Tuns** gathered under one roof in celebration of legal excellence. The collective presence reflects not only the stature of those we are privileged to welcome this evening, but also the respect and confidence that the Inns of Court Malaysia has earned over the past decade.
10. When we founded the Inns of Court Malaysia ten years ago, I do not believe any of us could have imagined that our journey would one day bring together such an extraordinary gathering of leaders from the Legislature, Government, Judiciary, the legal profession. For all of us in the Inns of Court Malaysia, this is a source of immense gratitude.
11. This evening is not an ordinary Grand Dining. It is, in every sense, a full circle moment for ICM. Last year, in Kuching, we had the honour of welcoming His Excellency the Governor of Sarawak as our Inaugural Honorary Bencher - and it is with great warmth that we welcome him back tonight as our Guest of Honour.

12. Tonight, we go further still, as we welcome and honour two further distinguished Benchers of the Inns of Court Malaysia: the Right Honourable Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Datuk Amar Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof, and the Right Honourable Chief Justice of Malaysia, YAA Tun Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh.
13. The publication of **YAB Datuk Amar Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof** and **YAA Tun Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh** as Benchers of the Inns of Court Malaysia marks another important chapter in the evolution of our institution.
14. The office of a Bencher carries with it not merely honour but responsibility of stewardship.
15. Benchers represent leadership and wisdom.
16. By welcoming such distinguished personalities into our family of Benchers, we further strengthen the foundations upon which ICM will continue to grow for many decades to come.
17. As I reflect on the road behind us, I am equally excited about the road ahead. With our Legal Education Series, our Legal Expert Series, our growing list of MOUs with universities, the Securities Commission and the Asian International Arbitration Centre, ICM has built an impactful platform for legal excellence.
19. Looking towards the future, it is our aspiration to develop a uniquely Malaysian comprehensive programme of professional legal skills training in collaboration with institutions of higher learning, where

eventually our home-grown barristers can stand, with pride, alongside their counterparts on the world stage. With the continued support of our members, our leaders, and friends, I have every confidence we will get there.

20. This evening, I wish to record my deepest appreciation to our generous sponsors, whose confidence in the Inns of Court Malaysia has made this celebration possible.
21. In particular, I extend my sincere thanks to our Platinum Sponsor, Klang Group; our Topaz Sponsors, YTL Group and Nekoo; our Rose Gold Sponsor, CLJ Malaysia; our Gold Sponsors, Telekom Malaysia and Reddi & Co.; and our Silver Sponsor, Concord College International School. Thank you also to many other contributors and sponsors.
22. I also wish to thank all our distinguished guests and participants for taking the time to join us in celebrating this important milestone.
23. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to every Office Bearer, every member of the Executive Committee, past and present, our Organising Committee, volunteers, sponsors, supporters and members. Many have worked tirelessly behind the scenes; many have devoted countless hours without seeking recognition. It is through your dedication, commitment and generosity that the Inns of Court Malaysia has grown into the institution we proudly celebrate today.

24. Together, let us continue building an Inns of Court Malaysia that future generations of Malaysian legal professionals will be proud to inherit.
25. Courts administer justice. Lawyers advance justice. But institutions such as the Inns of Court Malaysia preserve the values upon which justice itself depends. May those values continue to guide our profession for generations to come.
26. May the friendships we strengthen tonight continue long after this evening ends.
27. And may the Inns of Court Malaysia continue to shine as a beacon of professionalism, integrity and legal excellence for many generations to come.
28. As with the tradition of the Inns of Court Malaysia, I propose a toast to the health of our Inaugural Honorary Bencher, His Excellency Tun Pehin Sri Dr. Haji Wan Junaidi bin Tuanku Jaafar, The Governor of Sarawak.

To Tun Pehin Sri ! *(Raise the glass to Toast)*

Thank you and enjoy the evening.

**Wabillahi Taufik Walhidayah.**

**Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.**