

Reform committee recommends revamping EAIC

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Institutional Reform Committee member Mah Weng Kwai (middle) speaks to reporters after meeting the Council of Eminent Persons. Also present are fellow committee members Shaq Saleem Faruqi (left) and Ambiga Sreenevasan.

KUALA LUMPUR: The Institutional Reform Committee, set up to look into the reform of government agencies, has recommended that the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC) be revamped.

Committee member Ambiga Sreenevasan said the group was looking at the relevancy of EAIC.

“We are looking at that, and also whether IPCMC can be a substitute for EAIC,” she said after a meeting with the Council of Eminent Persons today.

IPCCM, or the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission, was proposed in 2005 by a royal commission to enhance the operation and management of the police.

The Malaysian Bar has been pushing for the IPCCM to be set up for over 10 years, but the police objected to it on grounds that the police force should not be singled out for action resulting from public complaints.

The government later set up the EAIC which looks into complaints on alleged misuse of powers by officers of enforcement agencies.

However, the EAIC can only make recommendations to the government and does not have powers to prosecute.

Another committee member and legal consultant Mah Weng Kwai said the reform group was also looking into whether government agencies should be answerable to the Parliament.

"We are looking at proposals that the appointment structure of the agencies' chiefs be made through the parliamentary select committee," he said.

Mah said once the reforms proposed for the government agencies had been put in place, they might restore foreign investors' confidence in Malaysia.

"All reforms are targeted to create a corruption-free society with integrity.

"Once those are in place, others will be happy to come and invest because they know the system is good."

The committee, led by former judge KC Vohrah, was set up last month to look into the reform of important government agencies that had been the subject of political controversies.

Among the agencies are the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC), Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), Election Commission (EC) and the police.

The committee has been given 60 days to submit recommendations to the Council of Eminent Persons, which will forward the proposals to the government.

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