

Findings and Determination of the Disciplinary Committee

Pursuant to s 93(5) of the Legal Profession Act (Cap 161) ('the Act'), the Council of the Law Society is required to publish the findings and determination of the Disciplinary Committee in *The Singapore Law Gazette* or in such other media as the Council may determine to adequately inform the public of the same.

This summary is published pursuant to the requirements of s 93(5) of the Act.

In the matter of Ravi Madasamy, an Advocate and Solicitor

Mr Ravi Madasamy ('the Respondent Solicitor') faced two charges before the Disciplinary Committee ('DC'). He was found guilty of misconduct unbefitting an advocate and solicitor only under the First Charge and not under the Second Charge.

It was determined for the First Charge that cause of sufficient gravity existed for disciplinary action under s 83 of the Legal Profession Act ('the Act') and the DC recommended that the Respondent Solicitor be reprimanded by the Council for the misconduct under s 93(1)(b) of the Act. The DC ordered that the Respondent Solicitor contribute a sum of \$3,000 towards the costs of the Law Society for the proceedings.

The Respondent Solicitor was charged with the following two charges:

First Charge

That Ravi Madasamy is guilty of such misconduct unbefitting an advocate and solicitor, as an officer of the Supreme Court, or as a member of an honourable profession, within the meaning of s 83(2)(h) of the Legal Profession Act (Cap 161) in that he on 4 September 2003 did:

- 1 attend at Changi Women's Prison [attired] in a manner considered inappropriate, in a religious robe and barefooted;
- 2 pass improper and untrue remarks about Changi Women's Prison;
- 3 fail to produce to the Records and Reception Officer the letter to him of 2 September 2003 granting permission to him to interview an inmate at Changi Women's Prison which was one of the documents required for production and on being requested for the same created a scene; and
- 4 threaten to sue the Duty Officer.

Second Charge

That Ravi Madasamy is guilty of such misconduct unbefitting an advocate and solicitor, as an officer of the Supreme

Court, or as a member of an honourable profession, within the meaning of s 83(2)(h) of the Legal Profession Act (Cap 161) in that he on 8 September 2003 when attending at Changi Women's Prison refused initially, to produce the letter of approval allowing him to interview an inmate and subsequently, his National Registration Identity Card ('NRIC'). He also threatened to file complaints with the Police and the Ministry of Law.

The DC found that the objectionable part of the Respondent Solicitor's conduct in the First Charge was not that he had appeared in his religious attire. What the DC found objectionable was his behaviour after he was initially denied entry.

The DC also found that for the First Charge, it was unacceptable for an advocate and solicitor to create a scene, just because he was not satisfied with the 'dress code' imposed by the host authority.

As a member of an honourable profession, it was unacceptable for an advocate and solicitor who did not get things done his way, to openly threaten a public officer, who was carrying out his duties, with personal civil action.

As for the Second Charge, the DC found that the mere threat of filing complaints to relevant authorities did not amount to misconduct. In reaching this conclusion, the DC also took into account the Law Society's withdrawal of an earlier allegation that the Respondent Solicitor was rude in his communications with the prison officer.

The DC determined that it was sufficient to recommend that the Respondent Solicitor be reprimanded as:

- 1 there was no fraud or dishonesty on the part of the Respondent Solicitor;
- 2 he had an explanation for being in religious attire on the morning of 4 September 2003; and
- 3 he had not been abusive even though he admitted he had behaved in an agitated manner and had threatened to sue the prison officer on 4 September 2003.

Council accepted the recommendation of the DC and reprimanded the Respondent Solicitor for his misconduct.