

JLSC clears air on Marcia mess

## Govt staying out Marcia fiasco—PM

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Marcia Ayers-Caesar

Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley yesterday insisted that Government will not be roped into the ongoing controversy with the Judicial and Legal Service Commission (JLSC), Chief Justice Ivor Archie and former High Court judge Marcia Ayers-Caesar, saying they would maintain a “Great Wall of China” approach on the issue.

Rowley said the matter fell within the borders of the Judiciary and the executives and as such saw no reason why the Government should request a commission of enquiry on the matter.

He made the comment in Parliament as he answered questions from Opposition members, one of which came from Chaguanas West MP Ganga Singh, who asked if Government was considering of a CoE into the judicial system given its current controversy.

“No, the Government is not considering any commission of enquiry into the judicial system at this time,” Rowley replied.

In a follow up question, Singh asked Rowley if Government was considering measures to deal with the over 50 part-heard matters that were left hanging by Ayers-Caesar.

“Madame Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear that the specific matters to which the Member refers is a matter which resides entirely within the borders of the Judiciary and this Government maintains the Great Wall of China between the executive and the Judiciary,” Rowley said.

Asked by Singh if he was “turning a blind eye” to the controversy in the justice system, Rowley replied that the Member had “no idea where the Prime Minister was looking. I give him the assurance that the Government is concerned about all aspects of national life in Trinidad and Tobago.”

On Tuesday, it was reported by the JLSC that Ayers-Caesar stood accused of misleading the CJ and JLSC members and will not be returning to the bench of the Magistrates’ Court any time soon.

Breaking its silence on the raging controversy, the JLSC, which is headed by Archie, admitted Ayers-Caesar provided the JLSC with a list of outstanding matters which stood at just three. However, it said it was only after the prisoners’ uproar at the Port-of-Spain Magistrates’ Court that an audit conducted by the Acting Chief Magistrate determined that contrary to what they were told by Ayers-Caesar, she actually had over 50 matters outstanding.

On April 12, Ayers-Caesar was sworn in as a judge by President Anthony Carmona. However, on April 27 she resigned from the position, admitting she had not given the JLSC accurate information and apologising for the effect of her actions on stakeholders.