

JLSC gets Koylass as its fifth member

[Rosemarie Sant](#)

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President Anthony Carmona yesterday swore in Ernest Koylass SC as a fifth member of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission (JLSC), thus meeting the constitutional requirement regarding the composition of the JLSC.

In an immediate response, former Attorney General Anand Ramlogan, who had sent a pre-action protocol letter challenging the JLSC's legality recently, said it was "a victory for the people, the Constitution and democracy.

But Ramlogan also felt it was "a knee jerk reaction to the threat of litigation," which failed to address issues plaguing the administration of justice, including "the urgent need for reform in the process for the appointment of judges and the administration of justice."

He said there was need for "greater transparency fairness and accountability to the public, who are the ultimate customers of the administration of justice." This, he said, demanded "a full and frank discussion about the problems that have led to the present unsatisfactory state of affairs."

Ramlogan said the President must now "do the right thing because it is the right thing to do" and invoke the powers he has under the Constitution in the public interest to ensure that there is an enquiry into the serious allegations that are swirling in the public psyche so that justice can not only be done but can be seen to be done."

"Nothing less, will do and the dark cloud of suspicion will not simply dissipate with this single wave of the presidential magic wand. There is much at stake for our young democracy and far too much time has been allowed to pass with little or no serious action in the hope that it will all simply go away. It will not. The damage has been done."

But Israel Khan SC said "too late too late shall be the cry," adding he has deemed everything done by the JLSC "null, void and illegal."

Khan, who first wrote to the President on the issue of the illegality of the JLSC, said the Constitution says the JLSC must have five members and it "is only when the commission is properly constituted you can select a quorum."

He is of the view that everything the JLSC did, "including the appointment of the three recent judges and three magistrates some months ago and any promotions they made is null and void."