

Top court pledges non-interference in judges' work

China's top court promises to ensure judges properly exert their judicial power without interference.

The Supreme People's Court on Tuesday published a document on improving the mechanism to protect judges and their associates in fulfilling their legal duties.

The measures stipulate that when handling cases, judges should not be subject to interference from other government organs, social organizations or individuals.

Judges have the right to refuse to follow any requests by any organization or individual that are without legal mandate or due process, the document said.

They are also entitled to refuse to comment on cases which are not in a judicial process or trials that they do not participate in, the document said.

Moreover, they are entitled to make complaints against nine types of action by governmental agencies or staff, including intervention in judicial process, obstruction of justice and restraint or suppression of the judges' independent expression of opinion.

As cases of disturbance in courts and harassment of judges have increased, the document said all courts should have committees to protect judges' safety, rights and interests.

Judges and their associates should also be provided with recording devices at their workplace.

The document pledged protection of personal information of judges and their families.

In January, Fu Mingsheng, who worked at a court of Luchuan County in Guangxi, was reportedly killed at his residence by suspect Long Jiancai, a defendant in a divorce case that Fu heard in 1994.