

Zamboanga Indigenous People's Representative Ismael Musa has formally filed a petition with the court Monday to remove Mayor Beng Climaco and Vice Mayor Cesar Iturralde from office for alleged grave abuse of authority.

Musa accused Climaco and Iturralde of removing him as Mandatory Representative of the Indigenous group to the City Council after the release of a decision by the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) nullifying his appointment.

Musa also asked the Court to nullify his removal and reinstate him as the Indigenous People's representative to the City Council.

In her response, Climaco said she is merely acting on the decision of the National Commission on Indigenous People to remove Musa as IP Representative.

In a city hall press conference, Climaco said that her letter to Iturralde was for purposes of information and appropriate action.

The instruction was for the City Legal Office to inquire from the Comelec if the decision can be implemented immediately.

Musa however said that he still has a legal remedy to file for a Motion for Reconsideration with the NCIP Regional Office before he is removed as IP Representative to the City Council.

NCIP's decision was released last February 1, weeks after the Council of Elders asked for Musa's removal after the latter took his oath before the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP.)

Musa however said that Climaco's letter to Iturralde and City Council Secretary Zenaida Jayme was sent on February 2, the day after the NCIP handed down the decision.

Musa goes to court against Beng, Itu

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Musa said the order of the NCIP was merely to respond to the petition filed by the Council of Elders and was not an order for his removal from the City Council.

He explained that a remedy is still available for him to file a Motion for Reconsideration for a period of fifteen days from the release of the NCIP decision.

This is the second time that Musa filed a complaint against Climaco and Iturralde. The other week, the IP Rep filed a Disqualification case with the Commission on Elections against the two officials for his removal as IP Representative to the City Council. — Liza Abubakar