

OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR 2021

Response by
Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon

A FAIR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Courts, the Prosecution and the Bar play their part to administer justice. Each institutional player has specific and complementary responsibilities to uphold the integrity of the system. At the individual level, they approach their calling to administer justice with devotion and a sincere openness to identifying and remedying any shortcomings.



A robust judicial structure with a system of corrective procedures such as appeals.



Singapore Judicial College has been developing a Judicial Competency Framework to enhance training in the necessary competencies of Judges and judicial officers.



Increasing opportunities for High Court Judges to mentor judicial officers in the State and Family Justice Courts.



Establishment of cross-court knowledge management office to facilitate sharing of knowledge and best practices across the Judiciary.

THE POST-PANDEMIC LEGAL LANDSCAPE

We leverage technology to optimise our processes through multi-disciplinary collaboration with stakeholders.



Opportunity To Re-imagine Our Processes And Harness The Power Of Technology

- Forthcoming enhancements to LawNet.
- Re-examination of court processes and enhancing access to information by the public (e.g. single Judiciary Website, e-service for simplified track divorce applications).



Multi-disciplinary Skillsets And Upskilling Of The Profession

- Singapore Academy of Law, with the support of Ministry of Law and Singapore Institute of Legal Education, to launch SkillsFuture credit-eligible programme LIFTED-LinkedIn Learning Pathways.
- Law schools and continuing education frameworks equip the profession to harness the transformational potential of technology.



Shift Towards Dispute Avoidance Or Containment Mechanisms

- Promoting alternative dispute resolution processes for peacebuilding and proportionality in dispute resolution.
- Success of SGUnited Mediation Initiative.

INITIATIVES TO ADVANCE THE RULE OF LAW

Domestic Sphere



Civil Justice



- Appellate Division has come into operation, allowing the Judiciary to utilise appellate judicial resources more optimally.
- Forthcoming implementation of new Rules of Court.
- Insolvency, Restructuring and Dissolution Act 2018 (IRDA) offers more affordable and efficient methods of restructuring and liquidation.

Family Justice



- Advisory Research Council established to bring together international thought leaders to share perspectives on therapeutic justice.
- Family Justice Courts (FJC) and Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants to establish a Panel of Financial Experts.
- Online portal to allow litigants-in-person to submit court documents and connect with lawyer-mediators.
- FJC is working with Ministry of Social and Family Development to strengthen the maintenance enforcement regime.
- Revised Family Justice Rules to be implemented by mid-2022.

International Sphere



Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC)

New standard-setting procedural rules in final stages of development.



International Relations

Continued contribution to international conversations and engagements.