

JUDICIARY TIMES

The Singapore International Commercial Court After Ten Years

Charting New Waters

The
Singapore
International
Commercial Court
After Ten Years

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Francis X...



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SICC Celebrates Decade of Excellence with Commemorative Publication and International Partnership

The Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) marked two significant milestones in recent months, celebrating its 10th anniversary while advancing its standing in international commercial dispute resolution. In September, the SICC launched a comprehensive commemorative publication documenting its first decade of operations. Two months later, the SICC's pioneering model gained international recognition with the establishment of the Bahrain International Commercial Court, built principally on the SICC framework. These developments underscore the SICC's growing role as a trusted forum for resolving complex cross-border disputes and advancing legal convergence in international commerce.

SICC's Commemorative Publication "Charting New Waters: The Singapore International Commercial Court After Ten Years"

On 24 September, the SICC unveiled "Charting New Waters: The Singapore International Commercial Court After Ten Years" to mark a decade of the court's operations.

Co-edited by Justice Philip Jeyaretnam, President of the SICC, and Mr Francis Xavier SC, the publication features 21 chapters from 34 distinguished contributors. It provides a comprehensive examination of the SICC's innovative approach to transnational commercial disputes, including its unique features related to foreign law, evidence, and costs.

HIGHLIGHTS

At the launch event held at the Asian Civilisations Museum, Guest of Honour Mr Edwin Tong SC, Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, delivered the keynote address. He described the SICC's establishment as "Singapore's answer to the evolving needs of international commerce", noting that it provides a trusted, neutral forum designed specifically for resolving complex cross-border disputes, while complementing Singapore's existing dispute resolution offerings. Mr Tong highlighted that the SICC's international bench comprises eminent jurists from both the civil law and common law traditions, with deep expertise in hearing commercial cases across different disciplines – a diversity that makes the SICC "truly special".

In his opening remarks, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon emphasised the book's comprehensive treatment of the SICC's jurisprudence, rules and procedures. The chapters span the litigation process in the SICC, from initial proceedings to final judgment enforcement.

Justice Jeyaretnam, in his closing remarks, observed that the book achieved four distinct objectives within a single volume: describing the philosophy behind the SICC, outlining its history and achievements, serving as a handbook for lawyers appearing in the SICC, and offering forward-looking perspectives.



▲ A group photo of the contributors to the Singapore International Commercial Court's commemorative publication.

Launch of Bahrain International Commercial Court

On 5 November, the SICCC marked a significant step in its pioneering work in international commercial dispute resolution with the official launch of the Bahrain International Commercial Court (BICC) in Manama, Bahrain.

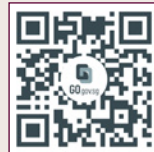
The launch follows a collaboration framework between the SICCC and BICC to support the Kingdom of Bahrain in establishing an international commercial court for resolving transnational commercial disputes and developing Bahrain as a dispute resolution hub. Modelled principally on the SICCC, the establishment of the BICC affirms the effectiveness of the SICCC model in providing a trusted and neutral forum for resolving international commercial disputes and driving legal convergence to enhance certainty for cross-border commerce.



▲ Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon (third from left) with Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa (fourth from left), at the launch of the Bahrain International Commercial Court on 5 November in Manama, Bahrain. (Photo: Bahrain News Agency)

A groundbreaking feature of the collaboration is the option for parties to bring appeals from the BICC to the International Committee of the SICCC. This transnational appeal mechanism, which draws on the expertise of the SICCC, offers commercial parties an unprecedented, trusted channel for resolving complex disputes.

To mark the launch of the BICC, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon delivered the King Hamad Lecture titled "The Bahrain International Commercial Court: A Beacon of Neutral Justice", reflecting on the shared commitment of both nations to strengthening international judicial cooperation and advancing the rule of law for international commerce.



Scan to read Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon's King Hamad Lecture

go.gov.sg/khl0511

The significance of the collaboration between the SICCC and the BICC for the international business community was further explored at the "The Future of International Commercial Courts: Towards Transnational Justice" conference organised by the Council for International Dispute Resolution, the Bahrain Chamber for Dispute Resolution and the Global Justice Bay on 6 November. In his welcome remarks, Chief Justice Menon underscored the collaboration's value to businesses, describing law as the "global currency of trust" for international commerce.



▲ Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon delivered the welcome remarks at the conference "The Future of International Commercial Courts: Towards Transnational Justice" on 6 November.

State Courts Mark 40 Years of Small Claims Tribunals with Public Open House

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Small Claims Tribunals (SCTs), the State Courts held a series of activities in 2025. These included a symposium in April, the publication of the inaugural book in the Singapore Court Series titled "Small Claims Tribunals in Singapore: Accessible, Affordable, Empowering", and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Consumers Association of Singapore to enhance consumer dispute management.

On 10 December, the commemorative activities culminated with an open house that attracted over 300 participants. The public went behind the scenes to learn about the SCTs' processes through hands-on demonstrations of filing a small claim online, role-play sessions of pre-trial consultations and a mock trial, experiencing the SCTs' processes from start to end. Key stakeholders, including the Consumers Association of Singapore, Pro Bono SG, and the Singapore Academy of Law, participated in the event, reinforcing their commitment to fostering public confidence in the justice system.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology for SCTs Cases

The participants also explored how generative AI technology is used in the SCTs to assist self-represented persons (SRPs). This includes the AI-powered translation service launched in December 2024, and the AI case summarisation tool rolled out on 2 December. These tools help SRPs better understand the crux of their legal arguments, evidence and positions, enhancing their understanding of the process and increasing their access to justice.

Participants of the open house observing a role-play session of a mock case hearing.

“

It is important that those who come before the Small Claims Tribunals (SCTs) feel that the SCTs process is fair, and they are not disadvantaged by perhaps the lack of means, or the lack of legal knowledge and expertise.”

Ms Thian Yee Sze
Principal District Judge
State Courts

About the Small Claims Tribunals

The Small Claims Tribunals (SCTs) were established in 1985 under the Small Claims Tribunals Act, providing an avenue for consumers to seek quick redress against errant merchants in a less formal and inexpensive forum without having to engage a lawyer. The SCTs' streamlined, judge-led procedures and simplified rules of evidence are designed to empower court users to navigate the justice process and present their cases effectively. Hearing an average of over 10,000 cases per year in recent years, the SCTs' jurisdiction now encompasses consumer disputes involving contracts for goods and services, landlord-tenant disputes arising from residential leases not exceeding two years, unfair practices in hire-purchase agreements, and various statutory claims. The claim limit of the SCTs is up to \$20,000, or \$30,000 with both parties' written consent.



Singapore Hosts ASEAN Meetings to Strengthen Regional Legal Cooperation

Advancing ASEAN Legal Collaboration

On 14 November, representatives from across ASEAN reviewed ongoing initiatives and charted future priorities at the 46th ALA Governing Council Meeting.

The Meeting discussed various initiatives including the recent establishment of the ALA (Singapore) Youth Wing and a Standing Committee for Women in Law, as well as the proposed establishment of a Standing Committee on *Pro Bono* Legal Services within ASEAN.

The Singapore delegation led by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Chairman of ALA's Singapore National Committee (ALA (Singapore)), and Justice Lee Seiu Kin, Vice-Chairman of ALA (Singapore), updated the Meeting on the progress of the *Virtual Training Marketplace*, which aims to provide training opportunities for lawyers across ASEAN. To refine ALA's focus and enhance its programmes, a new working group chaired by Justice Lee was formed.



▲ (From left) Singapore's Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Justice Lee Seiu Kin at the 46th ALA Governing Council Meeting.

Strengthening Judicial Education and Cross-Border Cooperation

The ASEAN Chief Justices convened for the 12th CACJ Meeting on 15 November. Among the topics discussed were judicial education, intellectual property

In November, the Supreme Court of Singapore hosted two regional meetings: the 46th ASEAN Law Association (ALA) Governing Council Meeting and the 12th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) Meeting. These meetings, together with other sideline events, underscored Singapore's continued commitment to fostering judicial cooperation and strengthening ASEAN's legal architecture.

issues, and strengthening of judicial cooperation in civil proceedings. In particular, the CACJ made strides towards preparing an ASEAN Memorandum of Guidance on the enforcement of foreign money judgments, to enhance cross-border dispute resolution.

The Singapore delegation, led by Chief Justice Menon, updated the CACJ on several key initiatives: the operations and plans for the ASEAN Judiciaries Portal, including the use of LinkedIn to promote the CACJ; the progress of the Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children Working Group and the programme for the upcoming 4th ASEAN Family Judges Forum in 2026; insights from the Standing Meeting of ASEAN Insolvency Judges, covering potential model frameworks for cross-border recognition and relief in insolvency matters and the role of alternative dispute resolution in insolvency proceedings; and discussions at the ASEAN-International Consortium for Court Excellence Resource Network's Roundtable.

Chief Justice Menon was elected as the next Chair of the CACJ, a post he previously held in 2013 as the founding member of the CACJ, and again in 2018.

Deepening Bilateral and Regional Cooperation

A key development during the meetings was the adoption of a rotational framework for hosting ALA and CACJ meetings. Proposed by Singapore, the framework promotes cost-effective and sustainable organisation of future sessions while ensuring continued strong participation by all ASEAN member states.

On the sidelines of the meetings, the Supreme Court of Singapore and the Supreme Court of the Philippines signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance communication in cross-border insolvency proceedings, a step that strengthens both jurisdictions' capacity to manage increasingly complex cross-border disputes.

Addressing Emerging Regional Legal Issues

The two meetings were complemented by seminars that brought together judges, practitioners, and academics:

- "The Future of Cross-Border Insolvency and Dispute Resolution in ASEAN", organised by the Singapore International Commercial Court and Singapore Academy of Law, discussed regional trends in arbitration and insolvency.
- "Transnational Practice of Law in ASEAN" organised by ALA and CACJ explored how legal systems across the region can better align to support deeper economic integration.

▶ The Singapore delegation at the 12th CACJ Meeting.

A Continued Commitment to Regional Legal Development

The successful hosting of the 46th ALA Governing Council Meeting and the 12th CACJ Meeting reinforces Singapore's role as a key partner in ASEAN's legal development. The Singapore Judiciary continues to support ASEAN's efforts to build resilient, effective, and future-ready legal systems through initiatives on judicial education, cross-border dispute resolution, and regional collaboration.



Singapore and China Strengthen Judicial Cooperation at the Ninth Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable

The Supreme Court of Singapore and the Supreme People's Court (SPC) of China held the Ninth Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable in Shenzhen on 18 November, further strengthening their longstanding bilateral judicial cooperation and commitment to mutual learning.

Co-chaired by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Chief Justice Zhang Jun of the SPC, the Roundtable discussed contemporary issues critical to the administration of justice. The topics presented by the Singapore delegation included *Judicial Education and the Comprehensive Training and Development of Judges*, *The Court's Role in Supporting and Safeguarding the Arbitral Process in International Arbitration*, *Strengthening the Administration of Justice through the Reliable and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence*, and *Achieving Best Outcomes in Family Justice*.

Beyond the Roundtable, the two Chief Justices held their annual Singapore-China Chief Justices Bilateral Meeting. During the two-day visit to Shenzhen,

the Singapore delegation also visited several Chinese courts, including the Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court, Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration, First Circuit Court of the SPC, China International Commercial Court, and Qianhai Cooperation Zone People's Court, gaining practical insights into their operations.



▲ The Ninth Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable took place at the First Circuit Court of the Supreme People's Court on 18 November in Shenzhen, China.

Singapore and Republic of Korea Renew Judicial Education Partnership, Discuss AI in Justice Systems



▲ (From left) Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon of Singapore, Ms Natalie Skead, Dean of Singapore Judicial College, Mr Kim Si Cheol, President of Judicial Research and Training Institute of the Republic of Korea, and Chief Justice Jo Hee-de of the Republic of Korea.

The Singapore Judicial College (SJC) and the Judicial Research and Training Institute (JRTI) of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea (ROK) renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Advancing Continuing Judicial Education on 22 September, during the two-day Sejong International Judicial Conference in the ROK.

Since the MoU was first signed in 2018 and renewed in 2022, the SJC and JRTI have held regular engagement and exchanges to advance judicial education in Singapore and ROK. This second renewal of the MoU, signed by Ms Natalie Skead, Dean of the SJC, and Mr Kim Si Cheol, President of the JRTI, and witnessed by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon of Singapore and Chief Justice Jo Hee-de of the ROK, is testament to the commitment of the two institutions to promoting cooperation and exchanging expertise in judicial education. Over the next two years, judges from both jurisdictions will have training opportunities to understand the policy approaches in key areas of judicial administration and selected establishments, while exchanging views on pertinent issues of judicial interest.

On the second day of the Sejong International Judicial Conference, Chief Justice Menon chaired a session titled “Justice in the Age of AI: When Law Meets Technology” and discussed two significant global developments from the past decade that have profound implications for justice systems: (i) challenge of access to justice; and (ii) rapid and dramatic technological advancements.

Chief Justice Menon noted that the challenge of access to justice has undeniably worsened over the past decade, as evidenced notably by the surge in self-represented persons (SRPs) and resulting global legal exclusion where many people effectively live outside the protection of the law. In this context, Chief Justice Menon highlighted the need for the courts to harness the transformative potential of generative artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance access to justice. He outlined three key considerations for integrating AI into justice systems and shared examples of how the Singapore courts are implementing AI tools to improve access to justice for SRPs, such as the introduction of *Pair Search* to help users research Supreme Court judgments, legislation and parliamentary debates, and the partnership with Harvey.AI to assist users in the Small Claims Tribunals.

Singapore Courts Share Court Excellence Framework with Thailand

At the invitation of Thailand’s Office of the Judiciary, a delegation from the Singapore (SG) Courts led by Deputy Chief Policy Officer Victor Yeo conducted an intensive four-day workshop in Bangkok, from 9 to 12 September, to support the Thai courts’ implementation of the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE).

The workshop brought together 45 Thai judges and court administrators from courts selected to pilot the IFCE implementation. The Singapore delegation guided the participants through the practical application of the IFCE, beginning with foundational knowledge about the International Consortium for Court Excellence before progressing to hands-on self-assessment exercises.

The participants worked in groups to evaluate their courts’ current performance, analyse results, and formulate improvement plans — developing skills that will prove invaluable as they lead similar initiatives in their home courts. The workshop’s interactive format, supported by simultaneous interpretation, facilitated robust discussion and knowledge exchange between the participants and Singapore delegation.

The initiative was well received and promoted within Thailand’s judiciary. Thai officials reported that Singapore’s support was instrumental in preparing their judiciary to adopt the IFCE as a tool for sustainable organisational development. The framework directly supports Thailand’s new Judiciary Strategic Plan and reinforces the country’s commitment to delivering justice that meets international standards.

This collaboration exemplifies the SG Courts’ commitment to sharing expertise and strengthening judicial cooperation in the region.

▼ A group photo of the workshop participants.



About the International Framework for Court Excellence

The International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE) is a tool developed by the International Consortium for Court Excellence (ICCE) for courts to assess their performance holistically through a self-assessment process covering seven areas of court excellence. It is built on core values that are recognised internationally to guide a court towards excellence by continuous improvement.

The State Courts of Singapore are one of the four founding members of the ICCE, along with Australia’s Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration as well as the United States’ Federal Judicial Center and National Center for State Courts.



▲ The webinar panellists (from left) Ms Quek Gou Jun, Senior Tribunal Magistrate Andrew Tan, District Judge Soh Weiqi and Ms Dhaniyah Hishamuddin.

State Courts Train Volunteer Lawyers on Small Claims Tribunals

On 27 August, judicial officers from the State Courts' Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster (CCTC) led a webinar titled "Decoding the Small Claims Tribunals (SCTs) – a Journey through the SCTs Process" as part of Pro Bono SG's Volunteer Capability Building Series.

As self-represented persons form the majority of litigants appearing before the SCTs — where legal representation is not allowed — the webinar aimed to equip Pro Bono SG's Community Legal Clinics (CLC) volunteers to better guide individuals through the SCTs process.

District Judge Soh Weiqi and Senior Tribunal Magistrate Andrew Tan joined Ms Dhaniyah Hishamuddin

from Trident Law Corporation as panellists, with Ms Quek Gou Jun from Agilent Technologies moderating. The 90-minute session covered the SCTs' jurisdiction, available remedies, and practical insights for navigating the SCTs' proceedings.

The webinar received positive feedback from the 450 participants, comprising mainly practising lawyers, with 99% of them rating it "Excellent" or "Good".

This webinar is part of an ongoing collaboration between CCTC and Pro Bono SG to train the CLC volunteer lawyers on the functions of the specialist courts and tribunals.

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon Shares Judicial Insights with Senior Public Officers

On 20 November, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon engaged in an insightful dialogue with participants of the Civil Service College's 15th Leaders in Administration Programme, sharing his vision for "Judicial Excellence in the 21st Century: Building a Trusted and Future-Ready Judiciary".

The session brought together senior public sector leaders to explore how the Singapore Judiciary is adapting to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving world while maintaining the highest standards of justice and public trust.

Understanding the Judiciary's Core Mandate

Chief Justice Menon began by clearly articulating the essential adjudicative role of the judiciary within Singapore's constitutional framework. The separation of powers and clear delineation of responsibilities ensure that the courts can effectively and independently discharge their primary function: the fair and impartial administration of justice.

Understanding this core mandate is crucial for maintaining public confidence in the justice system and strengthening public administration and the rule of law. When citizens understand what the judiciary does – and equally importantly, what it does not do – they can better appreciate its vital role in safeguarding their rights and freedoms.

Reforming for the Future

Beyond its adjudicative function, Chief Justice Menon highlighted the judiciary's critical systemic role in continuously reforming the justice system, for example by adopting therapeutic justice in the Family Justice Courts and developing the Singapore International Commercial Court to serve the needs of international commerce. This forward-looking

approach ensures that the Singapore Judiciary remains responsive to modern societal needs and challenges.

The judiciary does not limit its role to the resolution of individual disputes; it actively works to future-proof the justice system through thoughtful reforms and innovations. This includes embracing technology, streamlining processes, and reinforcing public communications efforts to ensure that justice remains an accessible reality in the 21st century.

Learning from Real Cases

To illustrate these key principles, Chief Justice Menon drew upon specific court cases and examples, providing the participants with deeper insights into how these concepts play out in practice. These real-world illustrations presented a more nuanced picture of the complexities involved in judicial decision-making and the judiciary's constitutional role.



▲ Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon engaging in dialogue with participants of the Civil Service College's 15th Leaders in Administration Programme.

Singapore Judicial College's 10th Anniversary: Fostering a Community of Learning Judges

The Singapore Judicial College (SJC) marked its 10th anniversary in 2025 with a series of programmes that demonstrated its ethos in building a community of learning judges.

Judicial Executive Programme Equips Leaders for Transformation

The SJC held its flagship Judicial Executive Programme (JEP) from 24 to 28 November. Designed to equip judicial leaders with the knowledge and skills to lead judicial transformation in an increasingly complex environment, the JEP covers five key themes: the judge as learner and adjudicator; the judge as system reformer and leader; judicial risks and futures; technology and courts of the future; and judicial transformation and innovation.

Over the five days, 29 judges and court leaders from 11 jurisdictions across Africa, Asia and the Americas participated in talks and discussions with senior judges and judicial leaders from Singapore and abroad, including Justice Michelle Gordon AC of the High Court of Australia, who shared candid reflections from their years on the bench. They also heard from experts and thought leaders in fields such as climate justice, communications, artificial intelligence (AI), technology regulation, design thinking and justice reform. Among these eminent speakers were executive coach Marshall Goldsmith and author Ken Liu.

In addition, the participants engaged in a prompt engineering challenge run by the Government Technology Agency of Singapore, and a design thinking challenge, jointly facilitated by the SJC and the Singapore Courts' Access to Justice Division and Office of Transformation and Innovation, to apply design thinking concepts to address accessibility, efficiency, and competency issues faced by judiciaries worldwide.

Participants of the Judicial Executive Programme sharing a light-hearted "graduation day" moment on the last day of the programme.



▲ The winning team of the design thinking challenge, comprising judicial leaders from Jamaica, the Philippines and India, pitched a roadmap to improve registry staff's morale, engagement and efficiency at work.

At a keynote lecture on 25 November, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon reflected on the importance of judicial leadership in an age where judges must exercise human wisdom in navigating the transformative changes of AI. Chief Justice Menon outlined three factors that shape a culture of judicial leadership: **curiosity** to try new approaches, being **critical** to remain discerning and disciplined, and **courage** in knowing when to act, when to stop when something is not working out, and when to say "no". He emphasised empowering leadership at all levels, the role of judicial education, and building networks of leaders and learners across jurisdictions.



▲ Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon (front row, fifth from left) with the participants of the Judicial Executive Programme and the SJC team.

Commercial Law Series Promotes Cross-Jurisdictional Dialogue

On 9 and 10 September, the SJC and the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) hosted the inaugural SICC-SJC Commercial Law Series. Attended by 29 judges from 16 jurisdictions, the event covered the essentials of arbitration law and practice, enabling cross-jurisdictional dialogue and knowledge sharing.

Preparing Judges for an Evolving Legal Landscape

The SJC hosted several programmes addressing how judiciaries can adapt to a complex, uncertain global environment.

In May, the SJC's inaugural International Fellow, Rosalie Abella, retired Justice of the Canada Supreme Court and a professor at Harvard Law School, conducted workshops using plays, short stories, and novels to help judges engage with the personal stories behind legal disputes to exercise judicial courage in making principled decisions, even in the face of societal pressures.

In July, Professor David Wilkins, an international expert on global trends and emerging challenges facing justice systems, highlighted two key challenges: the exponential growth of technological capabilities, particularly AI; and the breaking down of barriers in the legal profession due to a growing need for interdisciplinary approaches to legal issues.

In August, the SJC's second International Fellow, David Goddard KC, retired Justice of the New Zealand Court of Appeal, conducted a two-day course "Justice by Design". The participants explored how the judiciary can respond to emerging challenges while maintaining public trust and relevance. Using scenarios, design thinking concepts and critical discussion, they reflected on the role of judges in justice system reform and innovation.

Nurturing a Community of Learners

The SJC collaborated with the State Courts, Family Justice Courts (FJC) and Supreme Court Registry to organise programmes fostering community-based learning.

The State Courts held roundtables in May and a Training Day in July for judicial officers to share knowledge on legal developments and exchange experiences in navigating challenges.

The FJC Learning Week in August enabled judicial officers to conceptualise the "FJC Therapeutic Justice Model", through sessions with local and overseas experts in courtroom communication with vulnerable witnesses, psychology, social work, and public policy.

The Supreme Court Registry's Learning Day in November featured trainers from the University of Western Australia Mediation Clinic on effective communication and rapport-building, followed by panel discussions on courtroom and boardroom communication, facilitated by the Supreme Court bench, former and current judicial officers, and senior management members.

Strengthening Access to Justice for Court Users

The Singapore (SG) Courts' commitment to building a user-centric justice system has seen 38 targeted projects over the past two years that have benefitted approximately 4,000 court users monthly.

Simplifying Court Communications and Processes

Recognising that complex legal language often creates barriers, the SG Courts undertook comprehensive reviews of their communications. Court notices, instructions, and guidance materials – including protocols for Zoom virtual hearings – were refined using clearer language and more intuitive formats. These improvements enable court users to better prepare for proceedings while reducing the time, uncertainty, and costs associated with court attendance.

Enhancing Physical Accessibility

Some of the courts' physical spaces have been redesigned with user navigation in mind. Clearer directional signage and informational displays help visitors move through the court buildings more confidently. Additionally, dedicated vulnerable witness rooms now provide calm, supportive environments for parties involved in emotionally challenging proceedings, acknowledging that the physical court environment significantly impacts user experience.

SG Courts staff with a project showcase at the Access to Justice Day.

Empowering Users Through Information

To address common anxieties about court attendance, the SG Courts launched a video series titled "Your Guide to Attending Court" on their YouTube channel. These resources demystify court processes by addressing frequently asked questions and walking users through typical court experiences. The initiative extends to visual communication tools, including bite-sized infographics such as the "Understanding Bail" pamphlet, which translate complex legal information into accessible language and formats.

Building Community Understanding

The Justice Awareness @ Heartlands programme, launched in 2025, connects the courts with residents. The inaugural session in May focused on family violence and harassment matters, while the upcoming January 2026 session will address finances and debt management to help community members avoid bankruptcy.



This proactive outreach fosters realistic expectations about court processes and builds public trust in the justice system.

Transforming the Complete User Journey

These diverse initiatives, celebrated during the SG Courts' annual Access to Justice Day on 15 October, demonstrate how the SG Courts have moved beyond isolated improvements to embrace systematic transformation. By addressing communication barriers, physical accessibility, information gaps, and community understanding simultaneously, the courts have created a more inclusive justice system that serves all users with greater clarity and confidence.

The comprehensive nature of the initiatives reflects the SG Courts' recognition that access to justice requires attention to every touchpoint in the user journey, from initial information-seeking through final resolution.

Singapore Courts Honour Volunteers for "Making a Difference, Delivering Justice"

The Singapore Courts celebrated the invaluable contributions of their dedicated court volunteers at the Judiciary Volunteers Appreciation event on 26 November, recognising individuals who exemplify the spirit of "Making a Difference, Delivering Justice".

The event honoured 23 volunteers who have served at the State Courts' Court Dispute Resolution Cluster for 10 and 15 years, and two lawyers – Mr Allagarsamy s/o Palaniyappan and Mr Mahadevan Lukshumayeh – who have each contributed more than 25 years to the Legal Assistance Scheme for Capital Offences (LASCO), demonstrating extraordinary commitment to ensuring access to justice.

The annual Outstanding Court Volunteer awards were also presented. Mr Choo Si Sen, a dedicated volunteer mediator at the Court Dispute Resolution Cluster, received the award in the Advocate and Solicitor Category. In the Open Category, Ms Ng Lee Lee, a Contract Manager with a construction contract consultancy firm who mediates Small Claims Tribunals cases, was recognised for her outstanding contributions.

“

Although you come from diverse backgrounds and assist us in many different ways, all of you are united by your passion and commitment to ensuring that we make access to justice a reality for our fellow citizens and residents. So, I would like to express on behalf of the Judiciary, our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to each and every one of you for stepping forward and for offering your time, energies and expertise to support the work of our Judiciary.”

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon
Supreme Court of Singapore



▲ Outstanding Court Volunteer Award recipients Mr Choo Si Sen (left) and Ms Ng Lee Lee (right) with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon.



▲ LASCO Long Service Award recipients Mr Mahadevan Lukshumayeh (left) and Mr Allagarsamy s/o Palaniyappan (right) with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon.



▲ Long Service Award recipients with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon.

Notable Visits

The Singapore (SG) Courts welcomed delegations and distinguished visitors, and facilitated exchanges on judicial innovation, international cooperation, and best practices in court administration.



On 27 August, four judges from the Middle East and North Africa region who were in Singapore to attend the Singapore Convention Week met Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon. They exchanged insights in mediation, dispute resolution, and the use of artificial intelligence in the judiciary.

On 28 August, Fijian Acting Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Mr Siromi Dokonivalu Turaga, led a delegation to visit the Supreme Court. Principal District Judge and Deputy Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Mr Toh Yung Cheong, delivered a presentation on the Singapore Judiciary's integrated case management systems and virtual court proceedings.



On 25 September, Mdm Azwarnida Affandi, Deputy Director General of Insolvency Malaysia, and Mdm Nur Zatil Hidayah Binti Ali, Senior Assistant Director of Insolvency (Liquidation Division), visited the Supreme Court. Justice Aidan Xu welcomed the delegation whilst Assistant Registrar Ms Jacqueline Lee briefed them on insolvency and arbitration in the SG Courts. Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Mr Tan Ken Hwee, also shared the Singapore Judiciary's digitalisation journey and cybersecurity efforts.



On 25 September, Dr Jo Farrar CB OBE, Permanent Secretary of the United Kingdom Ministry of Justice, met Justice Aidan Xu, Judge in charge of Transformation and Innovation, and Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Mr Tan Ken Hwee, at the Supreme Court. The meeting focused on the use of technology in the courts and developments in digitalisation across the SG Courts.

On 22 October, Senior Judge Mr Li Changkun led a delegation from the Shanghai High People's Court to visit the Supreme Court. The delegation met Justice Aidan Xu, and Ms Jacqueline Lee, Deputy Divisional Registrar of the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC), delivered a presentation on the SICC.



On 29 October, a delegation led by Ms Wang Hong, Executive Deputy Party Secretary of CPC Shenzhen Political and Legislative Affairs Committee, visited the Supreme Court. During the visit, Justice See Kee Oon and Ms Crystal Tan, Divisional Registrar of the SICC, shared about the SICC.

On 4 November, First Deputy Prosecutor General Baimurza Turdakhunovich led a delegation from the General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic to visit the Supreme Court. Mr Foo Juyuan, Senior Assistant Director from Innovation, Technology and Transformation, presented on the SG Courts' case management systems and frameworks supporting digital transformation.



New Resources to Enhance Access to Justice

Generative AI-powered Case Summarisation Tool for Small Claims Tribunals Users

The SG Courts, in collaboration with American start-up Harvey.AI, have developed a new generative AI-powered tool that summarises case documents for Tribunal Magistrates and SRPs in the Small Claims Tribunals (SCTs).

The tool enables parties in SCTs cases to generate factual summaries of their case documents, helping them better understand their respective positions and evidence. This allows them to prepare and present their cases more effectively before the SCTs.

A key feature of the tool is its ability to provide factual summaries

The Singapore (SG) Courts are leveraging technology and enhanced resources to support self-represented persons (SRPs). Two recent initiatives — a generative artificial intelligence (AI)-powered case summarisation tool and a newly updated guidebook — aim to help court users better navigate court proceedings and understand their cases.

▲ A screenshot example of the AI Case Summarisation tool in the Community Justice and Tribunals System.

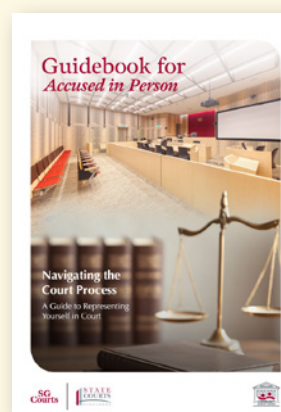
without offering case-specific legal advice to court users, ensuring that it remains an informational resource rather than a substitute for legal counsel.

The tool was rolled out in phases, beginning with Tribunal Magistrates on 10 September,

followed by SRPs on 2 December. It is accessible through the Community Justice and Tribunals System, an online case filing and management platform for small claims, employment claims, neighbour disputes and protection from harassment cases filed in the State Courts.

New Guidebook for Accused in Person

The SG Courts, together with the Community Justice Centre, have published the third edition of the Guidebook for Accused in Person. The guidebook provides comprehensive information about the various stages in criminal proceedings. The Chinese, Malay and Tamil versions of the guidebook will be available in 2026.



- ✓ New design with more infographics
- ✓ Chapter introductions and hyperlinks
- ✓ Useful links and forms
- ✓ Dedicated section for Night Court cases
- ✓ Bail and Mitigation checklists
- ✓ Plead Guilty guidelines
- ✓ Victim Compensation Regime



Scan to read the third edition of the Guidebook for Accused in Person

go.gov.sg/gap-en-2025

State Courts Garner Best Customer Satisfaction Score for Transactional Services

On 21 November, the State Courts were named as the top agency for Best Customer Satisfaction for Transactional Services (Category A*) at the Digital Services Awards 2025. This was based on public users' ratings on State Courts' digital services, such as the State Courts' online case filing and management portals – Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) and Community Justice and Tribunals System (CJTS), after they have completed a transaction on the ICMS or CJTS portal.

The Digital Services Awards, which is organised by the Government Technology Agency of Singapore and supported by the Smart Nation Group, celebrates

excellence in delivering digital services to the public. Agencies in Category A* must have at least one valid Transactional Service with a minimum of 100 ratings each, within the qualifying period of 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025.

*Category A refers to agencies with an average monthly number of web visitors <= 100,000 in calendar year 2024

Integrated Case Management System

The Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) is an online platform for parties to manage criminal cases at the State Courts and Youth Courts. Parties can use ICMS to view case details and updates, change a court date, file online applications and file court documents.

Community Justice and Tribunals System

The Community Justice and Tribunals System (CJTS) is an online platform for parties to file and manage their cases in the Small Claims Tribunals, Employment Claims Tribunals, Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals or Protection from Harassment Court (simplified proceedings). Some of the functions found in CJTS include taking a pre-filing assessment, filing a claim or other applications and documents, selecting or changing a court date, viewing case details and monitoring developments and settling the dispute online.



▲ Mr Edwin San, Registrar of the State Courts, receiving the Best Customer Satisfaction for Transactional Services (Category A) award at the Digital Services Awards 2025 from Ms Jasmine Lau, Minister of State, Ministry of Digital Development and Information & Ministry of Education.

Judiciary National Day Awards Investiture 2025

The Judiciary National Day Awards Investiture 2025 was held on 27 November to honour 30 Singapore Courts officers who received this year's National Day Awards, in recognition of their contributions and service to the nation.

NATIONAL DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (GOLD)

Mr Toh Han Li
Principal District Judge
State Courts

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (SILVER)

Mrs Clara Goh
Deputy Chief Executive,
Office of the Chief Justice
SG Courts

Mr Tham Tong Kong Eddy
District Judge
State Courts

Ms Lee Meng Chung
Director, Strategic Planning
& Research
Family Justice Courts

Ms Carol Liew
District Judge
Family Justice Courts

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MEDAL (BRONZE)

Mr Koh Yeow Hwee Ryan
Deputy Director,
Building Infrastructure,
Infrastructure and Court Resources
SG Courts

Ms Gan Ruixia Rachel
Deputy Director, Transformation
and Innovation, Innovation,
Technology & Transformation
Supreme Court

COMMENDATION MEDAL

Ms Soh Weiqi
District Judge
State Courts

Ms Ang Wee Wee
Senior Assistant Director, Civil Matters,
Supreme Court Registry
Supreme Court

Ms Ong Shirley
Assistant Director, Corporate Planning,
Strategic Planning & Research
Family Justice Courts

EFFICIENCY MEDAL

Ms Lam Pei Ying
Assistant Director, Criminal Courts
State Courts

Ms Xu Pei Jie
Manager, Human Resource
Management, Corporate Services
SG Courts

Ms Azlila Binte Sueb
Manager, Family
Family Justice Courts

LONG SERVICE MEDAL

Ms Tan Li Ching Jill
Registrar
Supreme Court

Mr Lee Yeow Wee, David
Senior Assistant Registrar
Supreme Court

Ms Loo Mui Hoon Shirlynn
Director, International Relations
Supreme Court

Ms Lynette Yap Beng Lyn
District Judge
Family Justice Courts

Mr Chiah Chi Pin Daniel
Director, Specialist Courts
& Mental Capacity Act,
Adoption and Probate
Family Justice Courts

Mr Tay Hee Chiew
Deputy Director,
Language Resources,
Infrastructure and Court Resources
SG Courts

Ms Ainon Bte Mohamed Osman
Senior Assistant Director,
Youth Court, Family Protection
& Support
Family Justice Courts

Ms Angeline Kwah Lay Bee
Senior Maintenance Mediator,
Family Dispute Resolution
Family Justice Courts

Ms Anita Sandra
Language Lead,
Language Resources,
Infrastructure & Court Resources
SG Courts

Ms Latifah Binte Hassan
Senior Maintenance Mediator,
Family Dispute Resolution
Family Justice Courts

Ms Tay Tzu Ching Adelia
Manager, Justice's Chambers,
Corporate Services
Supreme Court

Ms Zunaida Begum d/o P M Abdul Sathar
Assistant Manager,
Maintenance & Enforcement Court,
Family Protection & Support
Family Justice Courts

Ms Low Peck Lan Helen
Senior Executive,
Office of the Registrar
State Courts

Ms Kasmah Wati Bte M Wari
Senior Executive,
Office of the Registrar
State Courts

Ms Chan Yoke Leng Vanessa
Assistant Manager, Service Excellence,
Communications and Service
Excellence
SG Courts

Singapore Courts Honoured for Community Service

On 8 October, the Singapore Courts received the Volunteer Partner Award and Charity (Bronze) Award at the Community Chest Awards 2025.

The Volunteer Partner Award recognises exemplary organisations for their regular volunteerism efforts with demonstrated outcomes to benefit social service agencies and service users. The Charity Awards are presented to organisations and individuals who have made significant donations to Community Chest, including outright donations, funds raised from events and contributions through SGSHARE, Community Chest's monthly giving programme.

Ms Juthika Ramanathan (right), Chief Executive of the Singapore Courts, receiving the award from Mr Eric Chua, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development.



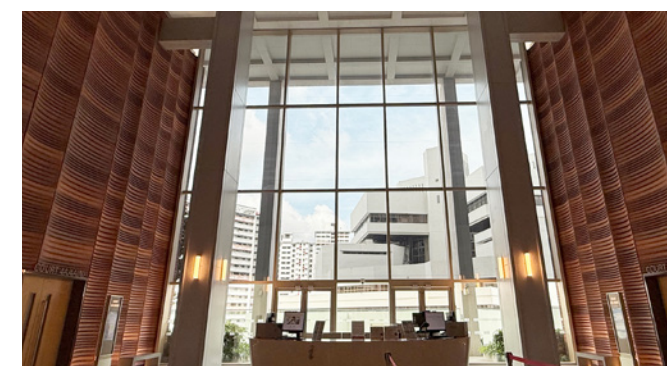
Family Justice Courts and State Courts Buildings Awarded Green Mark Platinum Certification

On 17 September, the Family Justice Courts (FJC) building received the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) Green Mark Platinum certification. This certification affirms the building's compliance with stringent environmental standards and validates the building's innovative green features, including pre-cooled air handling units, passive displacement ventilation systems in hearing rooms, and a shared chiller plant with the adjacent State Courts Towers that optimises energy efficiency across both facilities.

The FJC building also incorporates water-efficient fittings, reinforcing the FJC's commitment to environmental excellence while significantly reducing overall energy consumption. This achievement represents the successful integration of heritage conservation with modern sustainable building practices.

The State Courts Towers and Family Justice Courts building maximise the use of natural daylight in their designs.

On 23 October, the State Courts Towers' BCA Green Mark Platinum Certification under the Green Mark Criteria for Healthier Workplaces (HW: 2018) was renewed for five years, demonstrating the State Courts' commitment to a sustainable and healthy work environment. The key features contributing to this certification include optimal indoor air quality, maximised natural daylight and ergonomic workspace design principles, all of which create a more conducive working environment that promotes employee wellness.



Behind the Scenes with Officers from the Singapore International Commercial Court

As the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) celebrates its 10th anniversary, we speak to four officers who work behind the scenes to help ensure its continued success as a premier forum for international commercial dispute resolution.



SARAH LOKE

Assistant Director
Business Development

The SICC Business Development (BD) team plays a pivotal role in advancing the SICC's standing as a leading forum for resolving international commercial disputes. By collaborating closely with the SICC Registry and institutional partners, the team drives strategic outreach, fosters partnerships, and leads thought leadership initiatives to strengthen global awareness of the SICC. This includes crafting targeted communications, supporting judicial engagements, and ensuring that the SICC's unique value proposition is clearly communicated to international users.



KIM NA HYUN

Assistant Director
Registry



LOH HULIN

Assistant Director
Registry



CINDY CHEUNG

Assistant Director
Registry

The SICC Registry is responsible for administering cases filed in the SICC, as well as appeals to the Court of Appeal arising from SICC decisions. In addition, the team shortlists cases from the General Division of the High Court (GDHC) that may be suitable for transfer to the SICC. The Registry also evaluates applications from foreign lawyers and experts seeking registration with the SICC and maintains SICC-related statistics. It serves as the primary point of contact for stakeholders seeking information on SICC-related matters.

What are your key responsibilities?

Sarah: Our work involves a balance of strategic planning and hands-on execution, where we plan for the future while also tackling immediate needs. Recent highlights include the inaugural SICC–Singapore Judicial College Commercial Law Series in September and the upcoming SICC Seminar 2026 in January. We support judges' local and overseas speaking engagements, and create pre-event and post-event content to extend the impact of each engagement. We also host foreign delegations, including practitioners, government representatives and ministers, who are keen to learn more about the SICC and international commercial courts.

Registry: The Registry manages case administration, shortlisting GDHC cases for potential transfer to the SICC, evaluates foreign lawyer and law expert applications, and responds to SICC-related inquiries. We also maintain statistical reporting and ensure that the SICC's processes remain user-centric and efficient for all parties involved.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

Sarah: A key challenge is engaging a global and diverse audience with differing legal traditions, expectations, and familiarity with international commercial courts. Tailoring our messaging and outreach to meet the unique needs of different regions and stakeholder groups requires careful consideration and adaptability.

Registry: As the main point of contact for both internal and external stakeholders, we face the challenge of managing diverse needs and expectations. Our coordination often involves working across

multiple time zones with foreign parties, counsel, and International Judges, which can be demanding yet crucial for smooth case administration.

Are there any misconceptions about the work you do?

Sarah: A common misconception is that business development is about "grabbing cases" or competing for work. In reality, our role is about building trust and raising awareness of the SICC's capabilities. We focus on explaining the SICC's framework, sharing its jurisprudence, and fostering long-term relationships. By increasing the SICC's profile and ensuring informed awareness, we help parties make confident, informed decisions when choosing a forum for dispute resolution.

Registry: Some might assume that our tasks are administrative. While each individual task may seem straightforward, the breadth and variability of our workload make it complex and multifaceted. The coordination required to manage case flow and respond to a wide range of inquiries means our responsibilities are dynamic and far-reaching.

What keeps you going?

Sarah: The support we receive from our colleagues across the Judiciary, Registry, and partner institutions is invaluable. It's especially meaningful to contribute to the SICC's growth and be part of its journey as it continues to evolve and establish itself as a leader in international commercial dispute resolution.

Registry: Our strong rapport within the Registry team allows us to manage expectations and navigate challenges effectively.

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Singapore 178879

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1 Havelock Square
Singapore 059724

Family Justice Courts
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Singapore 059725