

JUDICIARY TIMES



OPENING OF THE LEGAL
YEAR 2019: THE NEXT
CHAPTER IN OUR JOURNEY

STATE COURTS TOWERS:
STRUCTURAL WORKS
COMPLETED

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS
WORKPLAN 2019:
EVERY OUTCOME -
A WAY FORWARD

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OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR 2019: THE NEXT CHAPTER IN OUR JOURNEY



Led by The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, the Supreme Court Bench adorned their ceremonial robes to herald the Opening of Legal Year on 7 January at the Supreme Court Auditorium. Invited guests from the legal community, including legal luminaries from abroad, were addressed by Chief Justice, Attorney-General Lucien Wong, and Mr Gregory Vijayendran, SC, President of the Law Society, who took stock of the work done in the past year, and set out the directions ahead.

In his address, Chief Justice exhorted the legal community to shift their collective attention to prepare themselves for a dramatically changing legal landscape that is being reshaped by three significant forces: globalisation, technology, and the growing commercialisation of the law. He highlighted the need for a spirit of togetherness, and a multi-pronged approach to confront the complex challenges ahead. He suggested three possible areas of focus for reforming, reimagining, and remodeling the legal profession, focusing on the areas of legal education, professional training and transformation and innovation within the Judiciary.



CONSOLIDATING OUR CHANGES
THE NEXT CHAPTER IN OUR JOURNEY
CONFRONTING FUTURE CHALLENGES

Strengthening Dispute Resolution Frameworks	Fortifying International Ties and Partnerships	The Challenge	Charting the Course
<p>Family Justice The recommendations by the inter-agency Committee to Review and Enhance Reforms in the Family Justice System will further strengthen the family justice framework.</p> <p>Civil Justice The recommendations by the Civil Justice Commission and the Civil Justice Review Committee, released for public consultation in October 2018, aim to improve the civil justice system.</p> <p>Criminal Justice Empanelling of three-Judge benches for Magistrates' Appeals and issuance of guideline judgments have enriched Singapore's sentencing jurisprudence and the Criminal Justice Reform Act enacted in 2018 will strengthen the criminal justice framework.</p>	<p>Deepening engagement with ASEAN through regular meetings.</p> <p>Strengthening ties with China's Supreme People's Court through the annual Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable.</p> <p>Fortified relations with other judiciaries through active participation in, and hosting of, international meetings.</p> <p>Appointments of Singapore Judges in overseas courts reflect the growing international standing of our Judges.</p>	<p>Legal landscape is being changed by forces of globalisation, technology and the growing commercialisation of law. Together, these form a "wicked problem".</p> <p>This will affect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the design of courts and dispute resolution mechanisms the development of the law the practice of the law and the demand for legal services 	<p>Need for a spirit of togetherness, and a multi-pronged approach.</p> <p>The Chief Justice will start a new series of conversations on the impact of the three forces on the profession, with three broad areas of focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the reform of legal education professional training and continuing development transformation and innovation within the Judiciary

Read the full response at: www.supremecourt.gov.sg/news/speeches/

Bringing the day's event to a close, Chief Justice and Mrs Menon hosted the annual Judiciary Dinner at the Istana on the same evening. The Dinner was graced by Her Excellency President Halimah Yacob and Mr Mohamed Abdullah Alhabshee, and was well-attended by the Judiciary and invited guests from the legal community, local and abroad.



STATE COURTS TOWERS: STRUCTURAL WORKS COMPLETED

The State Courts marked the on-schedule completion of the structural works of the new State Courts Towers on 25 January, with a Topping-out Ceremony which was officiated by The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon.

The ceremony was marked by a drone that scaled the new 35-storey State Courts Towers to place the symbolic final amount of concrete to top-out the structure. Standing at 178m, the building, which comprises a court tower and an office tower, is the tallest government building in Singapore to date. It will be fitted with 53 courtrooms and 53 hearing chambers.

Behind the steel beams and concrete, the public can expect a modern courthouse which will employ various technologies to deliver excellent services to court users and manage resources efficiently. For example, the Resource Management System will be used to manage the deployment of physical and manpower resources through integration with the State Courts' case management systems. It will be used for the allocation of courtrooms and hearing chambers as well as aid the deployment of court officers and court interpreters.

Other IT or web-enabled services that will be deployed in the new building include video-conferencing facilities, assistive listening devices in all courtrooms, and progressively, the Intelligent Court Transcription System which will transcribe oral evidence in court proceedings in real-time, and interactive self-service kiosks providing informational and payment services. Smart building technologies such as facial recognition and automation of building operations related to security, mechanical and electrical systems add to the suite of technologies that will be used in the new State Courts Towers.



The impending move from a nine-storey building to a 35-storey building, presents both opportunities and challenges. Presiding Judge of the State Courts, Justice See Kee Oon, said: "The State Courts face rapid changes in both the physical and contextual environments. We must be alive to these and continue

to adapt and keep apace of the environment that we operate in. We will look towards harnessing technology where possible, for the efficient administration of justice and to meet court users' evolving needs as we move forward to a new beginning."

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS WORKPLAN 2019: EVERY OUTCOME - A WAY FORWARD

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) held its fifth Annual Workplan event on 18 February at the Supreme Court Auditorium. The Workplan 2019, themed "Every Outcome - A Way Forward", was attended by close to 200 participants made up of staff and invited guests from the Supreme Court and State Courts. The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon was the Guest-of-Honour for the event.

The Workplan commenced with the annual workplan address by the Presiding Judge of FJC, Justice Debbie Ong. In her speech, Justice Ong laid out FJC's priorities and future plans. Justice Ong began her speech by highlighting that the theme is one of the values FJC pledged to uphold and explained what the curly ribbon in the logo represented. She said it is hoped that after the litigants go through the doors of FJC, the ribbon becomes straighter with an arrow pointing forward, in an uplifting manner, representing a way forward.

Quoting Chief Justice at the Opening of FJC in 2014, Justice Ong shared that "Family Justice is a unique field in the administration of justice." As a court that goes beyond the traditional roles of doing only 'right', Justice Ong reiterated on how the welfare of the child is paramount and is worth protecting.

To reach that endeavour for families, for a start, Justice Ong shared that

FJC can focus on the following:

- control proceedings;
- enable refreshed mindsets;
- focus on simplified processes and use of IT to enable an easier journey for our court users;
- encourage harmonious routes, mediation, and counselling at all appropriate junctures; and
- build up strong, solid, coordinated, and coherent non-legal therapeutic interventions and support.

A key enabler to achieve them will be to conduct a holistic overhaul of key processes with the use of technology, including considering whether court attendances can be reduced to save time and costs. For example, in the area of divorce, FJC will explore the possibility of serving notices automatically and providing more services online such as requests for certified true copies of court documents. Provision of online sample templates/outlines, and sample common court orders are also being considered.

Going hand-in-hand with these new initiatives is the equipping and training of both family judges and lawyers. To do so, a targeted and specialised curriculum will be rolled out for family judges to enable them to work within a multi-disciplinary framework. Also, controlling proceedings with strong case management will be a priority in 2019. On training of family lawyers, a Family Lawyer Certification

Scheme will be conceptualised and implemented to all who practise family law to be equipped with the basic specialist skillset. A Family Specialist Accreditation Scheme, through Singapore Academy of Law's Specialist Accreditation Board, is also targeted to be rolled out by 2020 with the first batch of accredited Family Specialists to be announced by 2021. Justice Ong concluded her speech by recognising the commitment and dedication of FJC staff - "the 'heartware' that powers us on, the 'heartbeat' of FJC".

After the tea reception, the external guests took their leave while FJC staff returned to the auditorium for a dialogue session with Chief Justice and Justice Ong, moderated by Deputy Presiding Judge, Mr Chia Wee Kiat. Staff members took this rare opportunity to engage Chief Justice on his views pertaining to family justice and his vision for FJC. In this candid and lively dialogue session, Chief Justice emphasised the importance of drawing strength and commitment from giving hope to the people who come before FJC. Echoing Justice Ong's opening remarks on FJC's unique role, Chief Justice shared: "I think ...in the family justice context that is the subtext: that's part of what you have to do in order to do your real work which is to iron out the curly wurlly and produce a nice, straight ribbon that is pointing upwards to give hope to the people. That should be the source of our strength and that should be our mission."



STATE COURTS WORKPLAN 2019: 2020 AND BEYOND



Presiding Judge of the State Courts, Justice See Kee Oon, announced 13 new initiatives at the State Courts 28th Workplan seminar on 8 March. The theme *2020 and Beyond* reflects the State Courts' goal to be a progressive and adaptive organisation that is future-ready. It takes into account the move to the new State Courts Towers in 2020, the challenges posed by the evolving demographic profile of court users and the opportunities provided by technological advancements to transform the delivery of legal services.

This year's 13 initiatives focus on four main areas:

- Delivering Excellent Court Services
- Enhancing Court Processes
- Engaging Stakeholders and Sharing Knowledge
- Transforming Capabilities

The first State Courts Workplan was held in 1992 with the objective of reviewing the work of the then



Subordinate Courts to identify areas for improvement, and setting out the strategies and implementation plans to achieve court excellence. At the 28th Workplan on 8 March, the State Courts reaffirmed a continuing commitment to review and transform processes to meet the changing needs of court users and the operating environment in order to provide meaningful access to justice to all in 2020 and beyond.

STATE COURTS WORKPLAN 2019 INITIATIVES

DELIVERING EXCELLENT COURT SERVICES

- CENTRE FOR SPECIALIST SERVICES**
One-stop multi-disciplinary facility that centralises the provision of counselling and psychological services, and management of support programmes for court users
- ICTS - INTELLIGENT COURT TRANSCRIPTION SYSTEM**
Real-time multi-party transcription system, with natural speech recognition, automatic text casing and punctuation insertion
- CIVIL ONLINE TOOLKIT**
Convenient one-stop online resource on civil proceedings for unrepresented litigants
- ENHANCING INMATES' ACCESS TO JUSTICE: ACCESS TO COURT DOCUMENTS AND LEGAL ADVICE**
Streamlined process for inmates' timely access to their court documents and legal advice

ENHANCING COURT PROCESSES

- EARLY ENGAGEMENT OF OFFENDERS BELOW 21 YEARS**
Programme to commence rehabilitative efforts towards youthful offenders before they are sentenced
- PROJECT RESTORE**
Court-initiated use of restorative practice to resolve relational disputes outside the courts
- PRE-ACTION PROTOCOL FOR B2B DEBT RECOVERY CLAIMS**
Framework to encourage settlement of B2B debt recovery claims before commencement of proceedings

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

- CLICKS - COLLABORATIVE LAW: INNOVATIVE CO-CREATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING**
Collaboration with Singapore Academy of Law to create co-working space in the new State Courts Towers
- THE FUTURE OF MANAGING PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS**
Conference to bring together various parties to consider how technology can be leveraged to improve outcomes of personal injury claims
- PUBLICATIONS**
- Guide to Judge-led Dispute Resolution: Principles and Practice of Non-adversarial justice
- The Law and Practice of Tribunals

TRANSFORMING CAPABILITIES

- DATA SCIENCE STRATEGY**
Overarching goals, strategic objectives and implementation plans to develop capabilities to analyse and use data
- DEVELOPING A DIGITAL WORKFORCE**
Two-pronged training strategy to help staff acquire and apply digital skills
- TRANSFORMATION @ STATE COURTS**
Initiative to strengthen transformational mindsets and capabilities

SUPREME COURT STRATEGIC COMPASS 2019 - 2022

The Supreme Court's ardent pursuit of court excellence encompassed a comprehensive review of its Vision and Mission for the next three years. With an eye on the future and the world which is changing at a dramatic pace, the Supreme Court embarked on a series of listening discussions with stakeholders and staff from all levels. What emerged strongly and resonated well is the Vision for the Supreme Court to be **a leading and trusted judiciary, ready for tomorrow**. As the face of Justice, the Singapore Judiciary should personify our core purpose of serving our people as the guarantors of the rule of law. The Supreme Court's new mission reads **"Accessible Justice that commands trust, respect and confidence"**. "Accessible Justice" redefines justice, adding the elements of activeness, voice and reachability to the tempo.



- VISION** A Leading, Trusted Judiciary. Ready for Tomorrow.
- MISSION** Accessible Justice that commands trust, respect and confidence.



Success Outcomes

- Thought leader in jurisprudence and court excellence
- Effective access to fair hearing
- High performing, service-oriented and passionate workforce
- Innovative and future-ready organisation

Our Values

- F**airness
- A**ccessibility
- I**ndependence, Integrity and Impartiality
- R**esponsiveness

SICC CONFERENCE

Traditionally held at the start of each year, the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) Conference brings the Supreme Court bench and the SICC International Judges together in one setting to review the past year's work and progress and plan the milestones and targets for the new year. Joining us for the first time was the newly appointed Justice Lord Jonathan Hugh Mance from the United Kingdom. Via the two-day conference that took place from 8 - 9 January, the participants discussed issues that ranged from IT developments to SICC New Rules, as well as explored emerging trends in the international commercial courts arena around the world and potential collaborative opportunities with other courts.



JUDICIAL INSOLVENCY NETWORK MEETING

On 5 April, the Judicial Insolvency Network ("the JIN") met in Singapore for its third conference. The JIN's inaugural conference was in Singapore in October 2016 and its second conference was in New York City in September 2018.

At the latest conference, the JIN discussed the four projects which were initiated at the second conference relating to: (i) core principles on recognition of foreign insolvency proceedings and judgments; (ii) modalities of court-to-court communication; (iii) guidelines when maritime law and insolvency law intersect, especially the arrest of ships and Articles 19, 20 and 21 of the UNCITRAL Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency; and (iv) identification of insolvency disputes which parties should consider sending for alternative dispute resolution.

In particular, there was detailed discussion on the second project involving modalities of court-to-court communication in insolvency proceedings ("the Modalities"). The discussion culminated in a

draft set of modalities which will be circulated to the JIN members for comment. Unlike the Guidelines for Communication and Cooperation between Courts in Cross-Border Insolvency Matters ("the Guidelines") issued by the JIN in October 2016, which focus on the principles governing how courts should communicate with one another, the Modalities focus on the mechanics of court-to-court communication. These include how a court may initiate communication with another court, the arrangements as to the time, method and language of communication, and the designation of a facilitator for this purpose. Akin to a checklist, the Modalities seek

to distil the basic administrative issues a court may wish to address in advance in relation to court-to-court communication, bearing in mind the time, language and cultural differences that underpin much of cross-border communication. It is expected that the JIN will issue the Modalities later this year.

The JIN also received the good news at this conference that the District Court Midden-Nederland (the Netherlands) will be adopting the Guidelines.

For more information on the four projects and the Guidelines, see www.jin-global.org/index.html



THE 2ND ASEAN FAMILY JUDGES FORUM

The 2nd ASEAN Family Judges Forum (AFJF) co-organised by the Family Justice Courts and the Singapore Mediation Centre under the auspices of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) was held on 28 March at the Supreme Court of Singapore. The one-day training programme themed "Family Mediation for Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children" brought together 25 judges and court administrators from seven ASEAN countries.

Building on the learning from the 1st AFJF conducted in 2017 in the Philippines, the Forum focused on the use of mediation within national judicial systems and was designed to deepen the participants' understanding of how mediations of cross-border disputes involving children are conducted. Developed in response to issues raised during the last meeting of CACJ Working

Group on Cross Border Disputes Involving Children (CACJ WG) in July 2018, the participants were immersed in an intense programme filled with engaging role plays, realistic simulations of a cross border relocation case and a child abduction case, and practical demonstrations on the use of the Common Procedures and Points of Liaison.

The delegates shared that they had a productive and enjoyable time at the training, and would be returning home with a deeper understanding of how mediation could be incorporated as part of a multi-disciplinary suite of different dispute resolution mechanisms for family disputes within their national judicial system.



CAPS DIALOGUE WITH FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES



Family Service Centres (FSC) are key touchpoints in the community that support the social and psychological needs of vulnerable families. There are 49 FSCs providing a wide range of services for families in need.

As part of a holistic approach to help families with multiple issues, Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) often triage appropriate families within the court system to these FSCs to further address non-legal social concerns.

In an effort to foster a closer professional collaboration with the FSCs, CAPS hosted a series of five dialogue sessions for all FSCs between January and March this year, covering all five zonal districts. FSCs were invited and grouped according to their respective zones to facilitate synergy amongst the agencies in the same zone. The aim of this series of dialogue sessions was to increase the mutual understanding of professional issues, processes, and services between FJC and

FSCs, as well as to generate new ideas and discuss ways to optimise collaborative efforts.

In all, the sessions were attended by over 80 professionals from 37 different FSCs. The sessions were very well received with more than 90% of the participants indicating that they had gained a better understanding of FJC and CAPS. Participants were particularly appreciative of the opportunity for an open sharing amongst professionals that generated helpful discussions to enhance the partnership.

Given the close working relationship between CAPS and FSCs, the sessions also allowed both teams to put faces to the names behind the email addresses and voices behind the phone lines.

The engagement sessions were a success, with many attendees further indicating that they would like CAPS to continue these engagement sessions with FSCs, focusing on various subjects.

FAMILY MEDIATION SYMPOSIUM

The Family Justice Courts and The Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) jointly organised the Family Mediation Symposium that was held on 29 March at the Supreme Court of Singapore. The Symposium brought together over 130 foreign and local judges, lawyers, Central Authorities, and academics from 19 jurisdictions to share and discuss issues and challenges in mediating family disputes both in a domestic and in a cross-border context.

Symposium participants were warmly welcomed by Presiding Judge of FJC, Justice Debbie Ong and Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court, Justice Judith Prakash, who delivered an insightful address on the importance, benefits and challenges of family mediation. First Secretary of the HCCH, Dr Gérardine Goh Escolar closed the Symposium.

The Symposium sought to raise awareness on The Hague 1980, 1996, and 2007 Conventions in Asia

and it provided a regional forum for the exchange of information, experiences, and practices of participating jurisdictions in mediating family disputes. Topics discussed at the Symposium included pre-action mediation and court-annexed mediation from Singapore, Australia, and Japan's perspectives, mediating cultural conflicts and high conflict family disputes, as well as recognising and enforcing cross-border mediation agreements in family matters.

Symposium participants were enriched by the stimulating presentations by both local and international speakers. They also engaged in open discussions with both the speakers and among themselves to exchange perspectives on the diverse challenges in leveraging mediation to resolve family disputes. In so doing, the Symposium achieved its goals of furthering mutual understanding between the jurisdictions, whilst reaffirming the community's common pursuit of protecting the welfare of the child.



STATE COURTS RE-APPOINT VOLUNTEER MEDIATORS



On 11 February, the State Courts re-appointed 136 volunteers to their panel of Court Volunteer Mediators (CVMs). The pledge-taking and appointment ceremony is conducted every three years for CVMs to extend their volunteer term and for new volunteers to be formally inducted to the panel.

The State Courts introduced the cross-divisional mediation scheme that will allow those who are eligible to mediate disputes in both the State Courts Centre for Dispute Resolution and Community Justice and Tribunals Division. This scheme, which will take effect later this year,

will provide the opportunity for CVMs to hone their mediation skills and be exposed to a wider variety of cases.

CVMs complement the role of judges and contribute to the administration of justice. Presiding Judge of the State Courts, Justice See Kee Oon commended the CVMs for their passion and dedication and said that they "serve an important role as gatekeepers of the trial courts" by working with disputing parties to help them resolve their disputes without the need for trial, reduce conflict and find closure. With early resolution, court and judicial resources can be optimally deployed, and litigation costs are contained.

THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME



The Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) for Court and Tribunal Administrators was conducted from 18 to 22 February. A total of 36 participants that included Chief Justice Bryan Sykes from Jamaica, judges, senior registrars, and court and tribunal administrators from Fiji, Kenya, Myanmar, Tanzania, Thailand and Singapore attended the extensive five-day programme.

In addition to the lectures conducted by the teaching faculty from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, as well as senior management members of the State Courts, Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court, Justice Steven

Chong, provided insights and shared his experiences in ethics and values in public service during the panel discussion. Also on the panel were Presiding Judge of the State Courts, Justice See Kee Oon and former Director, Institute of Public Administration and Management, Civil Service College, Mr David Ma.

In their feedback, all the participants stated that the course learning objectives had been met. The practical sessions and in-depth case studies that were specifically developed for the programme were found to be useful in addressing

the challenges and circumstances faced by them in leading the courts and tribunals today. The participants also reflected on how the ELP gave them the opportunity to learn from and interact with trainers, judges and court administrators from around the world.

Jointly organised by the State Courts and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the third run of the ELP saw the highest participation since it was first introduced in 2017. It is the only executive programme catered specifically to court administrators in Asia.

COUNTER-TERRORISM EXERCISE AT THE SUPREME COURT

Two gunmen entered the Supreme Court building by tailgating a staff and shooting at members of public on 6 December 2018! How did Supreme Court react?

Please do not be alarmed! This was all just part of the counter-terrorism exercise where the Singapore Police Force (SPF) collaborated with Supreme Court to validate operational plans and test the coordination between the two organisations as they responded to

a simulated terrorist attack within the Supreme Court building.

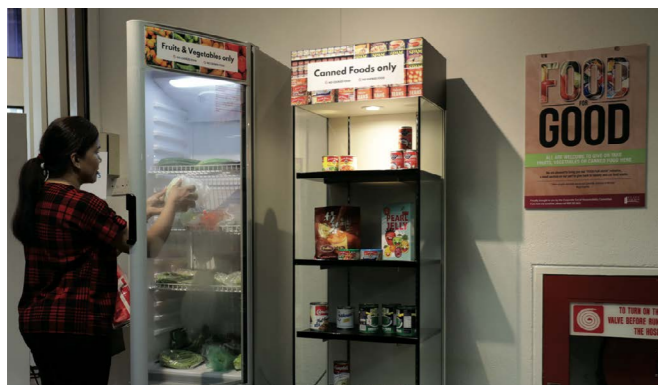
The situation was kept under control until the police officers from the Central Police Division such as Police Custodial Branch, Emergency Response Team, and Marina Bay Neighbourhood Police Centre responded to the incident. They coordinated their response with the auxiliary police officers to locate and neutralise the gunmen.

A Supreme Court spokesperson said, "The joint counter-terrorism exercise with the Singapore Police Force was very useful in preparing staff and tenants for a terrorist attack when it happens. With the global threat of terrorism, the exercise has helped to raise awareness, the level of vigilance amongst staff, and tested the robustness of our emergency response plans."



(Photo Credits: Singapore Police Force)

FREE FOOD AND BOOKS AVAILABLE IN THE COURTHOUSE



As part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts, the State Courts have set up a free food station and book station on level one at the i-Connect area. Aptly named *Food for Good* and *The Book Nook*, these stations were introduced on 11 January and 29 April respectively to encourage people to give back to society.

Comprising a refrigerator for vegetables and fruits, and a shelf for canned or dry goods, the food station is for everyone, including court users and the general public. *Food for Good* promotes the reduction of food waste and is meant to be self-sustainable through giving, and for those who receive, to not take more than what they need.

“ At first, we were just trying, in our small way to help court users who might need a little more. However, we thought that it will be meaningful to extend the initiative to the wider community. ”

State Courts CSR Committee

The Book Nook is also meant to be self-sustainable. Anyone can contribute a book that is suitable for children under the age of 10. These books will not only keep children occupied when adults go about their business in the courthouse, the children can also take them home to share with their relatives and friends.



7-15 JAN 2019

Attachment from the Judiciary of Thailand

Two judges from the Supreme Court of Thailand, and a Court Administrator from the Office of Judiciary of Thailand were attached to the State Courts from 7 to 15 January. They underwent a comprehensive programme that included observing court and tribunal proceedings as well as learning about information technology and case management in the courts. On the last day of their attachment, they visited the Family Justice Courts where they learned how family and youth matters are handled.



14 JAN 2019

Visit by the Federal Court of Australia

The Honourable Justice Sarah Derrington, President of the Australian Law Reform Commission, together with The Honourable Michelle May AM QC, visited the Family Justice Courts (FJC) on 14 January. They were interested to learn more about the judge-led less adversarial approach in FJC, and to study FJC's division of assets regime. They were received by Presiding Judge, Justice Debbie Ong, and Deputy Presiding Judge Chia Wee Kiat in the morning at FJC (Havelock Square) and District Judge Kevin Ng in the afternoon at FJC (MND Complex). The guests were briefed accordingly and there was a dynamic exchange of working experiences in the less adversarial approach between the two countries. The guests were also given tours of FJC's premises at both Havelock Square and MND Complex.



24 JAN 2019

Visit by Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Singapore

The Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Singapore, Mr Kakhramon Shakirov, paid a courtesy call on Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon on 24 January for the first time, after his appointment in July 2018. The Ambassador shared on the court and judiciary reforms which Uzbekistan was looking into, and further discussed on potential areas of collaboration with Chief Justice.



12 FEB 2019

Visit by Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Singapore

The Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Singapore, Dr Usen Suleimen, met up with Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court, Justice Steven Chong, on 12 February where they discussed details of the initiatives newly implemented in the courts of Kazakhstan.



21 FEB 2019

Visit by the Chief Justice of Jamaica

Chief Justice of Jamaica, The Honourable Mr Justice Bryan Sykes, led a three-member delegation to call on Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon on 21 February. Both Chief Justices discussed the importance of harnessing technology in the courts and possible areas of collaboration. Chief Justice Sykes' visit concluded with a meet-up session with the Dean of the Singapore Judicial College, Mr Foo Chee Hock, SC.



FEB/MAR 2019

Judicial Delegates from Japan visit Singapore Courts

The Singapore Courts received delegates from the Yamagata District Court, Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court of Japan between 26 February and 28 March.

In addition to court procedures, they learned about the use of court technologies and electronic systems such as State Courts' Community Justice and Tribunals System, the Family Justice Courts' (FJC's) iFAMS (Integrated Family Application Management System) and eLitigation, used in the Singapore courts.

Judge Masanori Hara from the Yamagata District Court visited the State Courts and the FJC on 26 February; Mr Koji Kanki and Mr Takuya Matsunami from Ministry of Justice, Japan visited the Supreme Court and State Courts on 11 March; Judge Tomoko Sawamura and Judge Hideaki Yamagishi from the Supreme Court of Japan visited the FJC on 28 March.



18 MAR 2019

Visit to the Reformative Training Centre

Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court, Justice Andrew Phang led a 16-member delegation from the Supreme Court to visit the Reformative Training Centre (RTC) on 18 March. Commissioner of Prisons, Mr Desmond Chin, and members of his senior management team hosted the Supreme Court delegation who was given an overview of RTC, and brought on a tour of the RTC and Prison School premises. The visit concluded with the Supreme Court delegation expressing their appreciation to the hosts from the Singapore Prison Service for their warm hospitality.



(Photo Credits: Singapore Prison Service)

19 MAR 2019

Visit by Japan Adult Guardianship Law Corporate Association

A delegation from the Japan Adult Guardianship Law Corporate Association visited the Family Justice Courts (FJC) on 19 March. The visit was part of a two-day learning journey programme in Singapore, which included visits to the Office of the Public Guardian and the Special Needs Trust Company Ltd, to understand and learn about the Mental Capacity Act in Singapore, as well as the roles and functions of each organisation. District Judge Daniel Koh received and briefed the delegation on the court processes and the visit ended with a tour of the FJC premises at Havelock Square.



MAR/APR 2019

Attachment of Delegates from Myanmar

Pursuant to the Singapore-Myanmar Integrated Legal Exchange (SMILE MOU), which aims to promote a better understanding of the laws, legal systems and institutions of both countries, the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts (FJC) hosted the attachment of the following officers:

From 11 to 15 March

- Assistant Director of Law and Procedure Department, Office of the Union Judiciary Supervision, The Union Supreme Court of Myanmar, Ms Theint Theint Htwe

From 8 April to 11 April (attached to the State Courts)

- Deputy Director, International Law and ASEAN Legal Affairs Division, Legal Advice Department, the Union Attorney General's Court of Myanmar, Mr Min Min Htet
- Additional Township Judge, Hlaing Township Court, Myanmar Supreme Court of the Union, Ms Suu Hnin Myat

The attachments, which included the observing of proceedings in chambers, covered the delegates' key areas of interest that included case management and court mediation at the State Courts Centre for Dispute Resolution and the Family Dispute Resolution Division.



4 APR 2019

Judicial Officials from Estonia visit the State Courts

Judge and President of the Tartu Court of Appeal, Mrs Kersti Kerstnava, and Deputy Secretary General on Legislative Policy of the Estonian Ministry of Justice, Mrs Kai Harmand, were received by Deputy Presiding Judge and Registrar, Ms Jennifer Marie, and District Judge Seah Chi-Ling at the State Courts on 4 April. The delegates, exchanged ideas on the use of technology and artificial intelligence in the courts with a panel of State Courts judges.



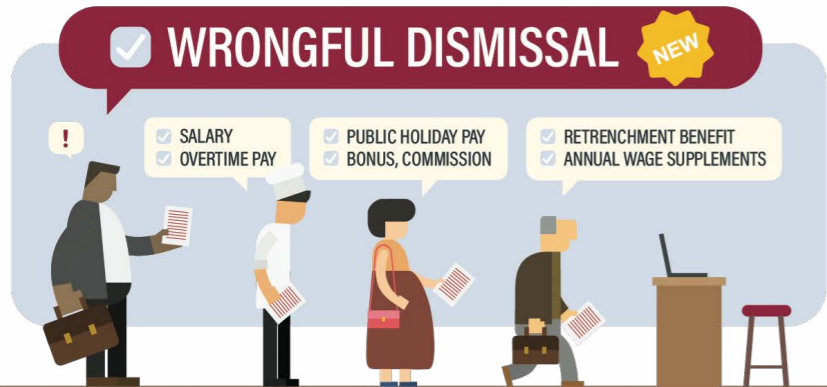
ECT HEARS WRONGFUL DISMISSAL CLAIMS

From 1 April, the State Courts' Employment Claims Tribunals (ECT) will adjudicate wrongful dismissal claims that remain unresolved after mediation. Previously dealt with by the Ministry of Manpower, this change follows the amendments to the Employment Act and Employment Claims Act to enhance the employment dispute resolution framework.

Employers and employees with both salary-related and wrongful dismissal disputes now have access to a one-stop service for both types of claims.

They will also be able to take advantage of the ECT's effective and affordable dispute resolution processes to resolve their disputes. These include the 24/7 online filing of claims via the Community Justice and Tribunals System (CJTS) and its e-resolution options.

As with other claims in the ECT, disputing parties will have to first undergo mediation at the Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management (TADM). If the dispute remains unresolved after mediation, the parties will receive a claim referral certificate from TADM to file their claim via the CJTS.



Community Justice and Tribunals System (CJTS)

The CJTS is an e-filing system for small claims and employment and community disputes. It provides claimants with 24/7 access to the dispute resolution processes and allows them to track their cases at their convenience and seek an amicable settlement through its e-Negotiation and e-Mediation options, without having to go to the State Courts. First launched in July 2017, the CJTS was enhanced for the online filing of employment claims on 7 January 2019.



STOP ORDER

Under the new procedure which took effect on 1 January this year, if a parent or party who had been granted a stop order by the court (that prohibits the child from being taken out of jurisdiction without an Order of Court or the consent of the other or both parents or parties) wishes to seek Immigration and Checkpoints Authority's (ICA) assistance on the stop order, he or she must file an undertaking before separately approaching ICA to give effect to the stop order. The undertaking assures the authorities that any updates affecting the child will be promptly given to ICA. For example, in a case where the stop order specifies that the child cannot be taken out of Singapore without the consent of the



other parent and the other parent, subsequently consents to the child's travel, the relevant party should notify ICA so that ICA will not stop the child from leaving Singapore. As set out in the Practice Directions, the undertaking should be filed with Family Justice Courts through the Court's eLitigation system before

sending the same to a dedicated ICA email address together with the stop order. The requestor need not go through a lawyer to file the undertaking. In the event a parent or party breaches a Court Order, it is tantamount to Contempt of Court which attracts both civil and criminal penalties.

ENHANCEMENT TO INSPECTION OF COURT DOCUMENTS PROCESS

Since 15 February, an enhancement has been made to the inspection of court documents process to enable court users who request to inspect court documents to download the approved documents online, without the need to come to the court personally.

With this enhancement, upon approval to view the court documents, requestors will be sent an authentication token (via SMS) and a hyperlink (via email) to access the documents. However, those who wish to continue using the LawNet Service Bureau to view documents may still do so.

“I was very glad when told I could download the documents via a hyperlink this time instead of having to return to the bureau to get them.”



— Lydia Lam, Senior Journalist



For more information on inspection of court documents, please scan this QR code or visit: <https://www.supremecourt.gov.sg/services/court-services/inspection-and-supply-of-court-documents>

ONE JUDICIARY ANNUAL REPORT 2018

The One Judiciary Annual Report 2018 encapsulates the work done by the Singapore Judiciary in 2018 to enhance the Singapore justice system and to ensure that justice is dispensed without fear or favour, affection or ill-will, and that it remains within the reach of all in our nation.

Scan to view the One Judiciary Annual Report 2018 or download a copy at: <http://bit.ly/OJAR2018>



UPCOMING EVENTS

DIVORCE AND YOU

“Divorce and You” legal talk aims to help you understand the divorce process in our legal system and to know what avenues there are to help you and your loved ones through this difficult time.

Dates of Upcoming Talks in 2019:
• 24 May • 19 July • 27 Sep • 22 Nov

Time: 6.30pm - 8.00pm (registration starts at 6.00pm)

Venue: Law Society Pro Bono Services, 17 Phillip Street, #08-00, Grand Building, Singapore 048695

To register, please scan this QR Code or visit <https://tinyurl.com/yalcrcna>



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH COURT SECURITY MANAGEMENT OFFICERS



Mohammad Adrean Bin Mohamad Thany



Bernard Chow



Ian Chen

Our courthouses are key installations in Singapore which are visited by the members of public on a daily basis. Therefore, it is paramount that the courts are equipped with the technology, personnel and up-to-date security procedures to create a safe and secure environment for all.

Security Management Officers play a significant role to ensure that court security measures, such as physical infrastructure, technological systems, emergency preparedness procedures and crisis response plans, are in place and robust.

Beyond protocols and state-of-the-art hardware, "heartware" is equally important when managing court users of different background and stature. This can be described as a balancing act between being firm but fair to court users, and showing empathy to those who are in need.

In this issue, we interviewed **Mohammad Adrean** from the Supreme Court, **Bernard Chow** from the State Courts and **Ian Chen** from the Family Justice Courts (FJC) to find out more about the work they do.

How long have you been working in the courts?

Adrean: I have been working for one and a half years in the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, my experience in corporate security encompasses more than 10 years heading the security departments of notable properties both locally and overseas. I have also contributed back to the industry by conducting security training for other security practitioners and the general community.

Bernard: I joined the State Courts in 2014. Before that, I was an Auxiliary Police Officer for 10 years.

Ian: I have been with the FJC for three and a half years. Prior to that, I was a Registrar for the Subordinate Military Courts & Military Court of Appeal of the Singapore Armed Forces.

What is a typical work day for you?

All: A typical work day would include attending to emergencies and incidents in the courts, managing the deployment of security officers on the ground, performing audit checks and exercises to ensure the security officers are always alert and vigilant and ensuring that the security equipment and systems in the building are in good operational condition.

Adrean: To add, the Supreme Court hears many high profile cases, organises public events and receives important dignitaries locally and from overseas. As such, my team and I will conduct scenario planning and make necessary preparations to mitigate potential related risks.

Why are you passionate about your job?

Adrean: I started my career in security just after the events of 9/11. It made me realise that everyone has a role to play to ensure the safety and security of our loved ones. By safeguarding someone else's loved one at my place of work, I believe that my own are being watched over by other security practitioners too.

Bernard: I am very committed to protecting and serving the community; this is why I got into the field of security. Security work is beyond systematic objectives; I am also passionate about the human aspect it brings. For example, helping people from all walks of life during the course of my work - it could be something as trivial as the retrieval of a lost item, but it could mean the world to its owner. Knowing that I can help, even if it is in a small way, is fulfilling.

Ian: The work that our judges and staff do is really tough. I care for them and do not wish for any harm to befall them especially from a security point of view, which is under my care. Same for the FJC court users that are made up of families and youths.

What are some valuable skills or lessons that you have learnt from the job?

Adrean: There is usually more than meets the eye. Certain situations require the correct perspective (or sometimes multiple perspectives) to be resolved. In certain cases, prioritisation is key.

Bernard: It would be emotional intelligence and decisiveness. Emotional intelligence is important, and especially useful to help manage court users in more challenging situations. This includes showing empathy towards court users who have breached courthouse rules unknowingly. When handling security-related incidents, I often have to make decisions quickly. As every situation is unique, being able to make the right call is a very valuable skill.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

Adrean: Promoting the idea of community policing - it is everyone's role to play in the overall security programme and we depend on persons reporting any peculiarity or threat.

Bernard: We will always have to be prepared to face any kind of threat. The recent Christchurch Shooting on

15 March serves as a warning of the extensive damage that can be caused by just one person. As there are many ways in which a similar situation can play out, I would have to think about how to train and prepare our security team and colleagues to handle such a scenario.

Ian: Managing emotionally charged parties going through difficult times is always challenging. There is a need to maintain security and at the same time be sensitive and understanding.

Share a memorable incident that took place during the course of your job.

Bernard: It was a theft case that took place in the courthouse in 2014. A court user had stolen a mobile phone from another court user who had dozed off at the State Courts atrium. Investigating the matter was not easy as the courthouse is a very busy place. Thankfully, due to the courts' comprehensive surveillance systems, we managed to identify the suspect, who was later arrested. This incident highlights the importance and benefits of having an effective security system.

Ian: Sometime last year, a suspect was spotted splashing a black substance around the FJC building during silent hours. I was glad that the security officers were immediately available on call (despite being after office hours) to review the CCTV footage and to assist with police investigations. This quick response led to the culprit being identified and arrested by the police.

What motivates you?

Adrean: That I am only one of many professional security practitioners who work hand in hand to contribute to the success of our organisation.

Bernard: Knowing that the security officers deployed at State Courts are doing a good job. I am always very happy to receive news that they had received compliments from court users for their exemplary service. I am also looking forward to the move into State Courts' new premises.

Ian: Keeping the courts safe for judges and staff, and also for the court users to go about their transactions, as well as the development of the security team to meet this goal.

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