

COURT NO. 1



FOREWORD BY THE SENIOR DISTRICT JUDGE



As in previous years, the Honourable the Chief Justice has put forth a new challenge to the Subordinate Courts in this year's Workplan Seminar. The challenge was for the Subordinate Courts to move beyond being world-class, and to lead from the future. It was for us to build upon a foundation of excellence, and to become a timeless institution, well-placed to weather the incessant and relentless winds of change. This Annual Report chronicles the achievements made by the Subordinate Courts.

Continual training, education, reform, and innovation have ensured the Subordinate Courts' resilience in the face of a brave new globalised world where the advance of technology, life sciences, geo-political and other forces relentlessly challenge the limits of human endeavour. Our governance structures have remained adaptable and relevant to changing needs and contexts, and performance measurement has become entrenched as a crucial component of our overall strategic framework. In the realm of Criminal Justice, the Subordinate Courts have remained relevant and kept pace with the changing patterns of crime and criminality, by establishing a sentencing framework focused on reducing crime and deterring recidivism. This is to remain true to the timeless commitment of the Courts to protect the public from the depredations of crime. At the same time, the Juvenile Court has continued to uphold the principle of restorative justice, with its programmes to rehabilitate young offenders, and to discourage and divert potential offenders from the path of crime. In the sphere of Civil Justice, the Subordinate Courts have enshrined and embraced a plurality of various dispute resolution processes in the Court Dispute Resolution framework, working in tandem with the traditional litigation model. Partnerships with other

justice stakeholders and the pivotal role that is taken by the e@dr Centre have been crucial in reducing both the tangible and intangible costs of litigation and thereby increased accessibility to justice. They have also served to achieve the more efficient resolution of disputes, and to promote a reduction in the escalation of such disputes by early diagnosis and intervention. The Family Court has seen a landmark year, with the Court's commitment to protecting family obligations culminating in the establishment of the permanent Family Court building in Havelock Square, beside the main Subordinate Courts complex.

The Annual Report also features an interview with the Honourable the Chief Justice, who shares his personal thoughts and experiences with us on legal issues, and on matters pertaining to the administration of justice.

Finally, the Annual Report stands as a tribute to the dedicated efforts of the Judges, Registrars, Referees, Administrators, Technologists and the multitude of stakeholders in the justice process. For it is not any particular individual who creates an institution. An institution is the product of sustained effort by generations of builders who strengthen and improve it over the years.

As the Subordinate Courts journey through the third millennium, we forge ahead with the renewed commitment that we shall remain a bulwark in the life of the nation. For each day that we invest in our task of administering justice, we shall not merely be telling the time. We will be building the clock, and building to last.

Richard Magnus

Senior District Judge, Subordinate Courts