

JUDICIARY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026

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SEYCHELLES HOSTS TRAINING FOR JUDICIAL LEADERS FROM THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICAN REGION

The Southern and Eastern Africa Chief Justices' Forum (SEACJF) Leadership Training was officially launched in Seychelles, bringing together some of the region's most senior judicial leaders for a high-level exchange on Judicial Leadership and Innovation.

The forum has convened eleven Chief Justices from across Southern and Eastern Africa, alongside Seychelles' own Justices of Appeal, Supreme Court Judges, and Magistrates. Hosted in collaboration with the Chandler Institute of Justice and supported by experts from Singapore, a jurisdiction widely recognised for its advanced use of technology in court systems, the training provides a valuable platform for shared learning and regional cooperation.

The opening ceremony was led by Sangwani Nyimbiri, Coordinator of SEACJF, who served as Master of Ceremonies and welcomed the distinguished delegates. In his opening remarks, Chief Justice Rony Govinden emphasised the importance of collaboration among Chief Justices, noting that they play a central role in court management and leadership. Addressing the forum, Ron Chari, Executive Director of the Chandler Institute of Governance, thanked participants for their commitment and engagement. He underscored the importance of open and honest dialogue, encouraging leaders to ensure that discussions "move from dialogue to action." Chief Justice of Malawi, Rizine Robert Mzikamanda, who brings over four decades of judicial experience, also expressed his appreciation to the Seychelles Judiciary for hosting the forum.





SEACJF SIDE EVENTS

As part of the events, members of the Southern and East Africa Judicial Administrators Association (SEAJAA) undertook a courtesy visit to the Palais de Justice, where they were introduced to key operational systems and practices within our Judiciary.

The Southern and East Africa Judicial Administrators Association (SEAJAA) Executive Committee Meeting was also held on Tuesday 21 April morning at the Savoy Hotel.

The visiting Chief Justices also paid a courtesy visit to the Vice President, Sebastian Pillay, engaging in high-level discussions focused on judicial independence and regional cooperation.



SEYCHELLES REPRESENTED ON COMESA COURT

The Judiciary proudly congratulates Justice of Appeal Samia Andre on her appointment and swearing-in as a Judge of the COMESA Court of Justice, where she is entrusted with the important mandate of interpreting and upholding the COMESA Treaty. This took place on Monday 4 May 2026.



PRESS FREEDOM DAY WITH DIALOGUE BETWEEN MAGISTRATES AND MEDIA

The session brought together the Chairperson and members of the Seychelles Media Commission, the Chief Magistrate, Honourable Magistrates, and media professionals for an open and constructive dialogue on court reporting and access to information.

The engagement featured an informative presentation by Chief Magistrate Brigitte Confait, who provided insight into the functioning of the Magistrates' Courts and highlighted the wide range of matters that present opportunities for responsible and impactful media coverage. Emphasis was placed on the importance of telling not only headline cases, but also the human stories that emerge from the justice system.

This was followed by an in-depth discussion session, during which key issues surrounding media coverage of court proceedings were explored. Magistrates and journalists engaged in meaningful exchanges on the boundaries and limitations of reporting.



SBSA STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT COMMERCIAL COURT

On Wednesday 6 May we welcomed students from the Seychelles Business Studies Academy (SBSA) to the Supreme Court for an educational visit that provided valuable insight into the role of the Commercial Court and the broader justice system.

The session was led by Judge Natasha Burian, who sits on the Commercial Court. Through an engaging and informative presentation, Judge Burian introduced students to the complexities of commercial law and highlighted the evolving nature of financial crimes in Seychelles.



JUDICIARY CONTRIBUTES TO SEYCHELLES' FOURTH CYCLE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

The Judiciary reaffirmed its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights through its active contribution to Seychelles' Fourth Cycle Review under the United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism, held on 8 May 2026 in Geneva.

Representing the Judiciary throughout the preparatory meetings leading up to the review was Judicial Research Council member Ms. Danielle Coetzer, who holds a Master's degree in International Human Rights.

As part of the national delegation led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary participated both in the preparation of the national report and in the review proceedings in Geneva. The Judiciary's contribution focused on several key areas central to the administration of justice and the rule of law in Seychelles.



JUDICIARY HOSTS AI TRAINING TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

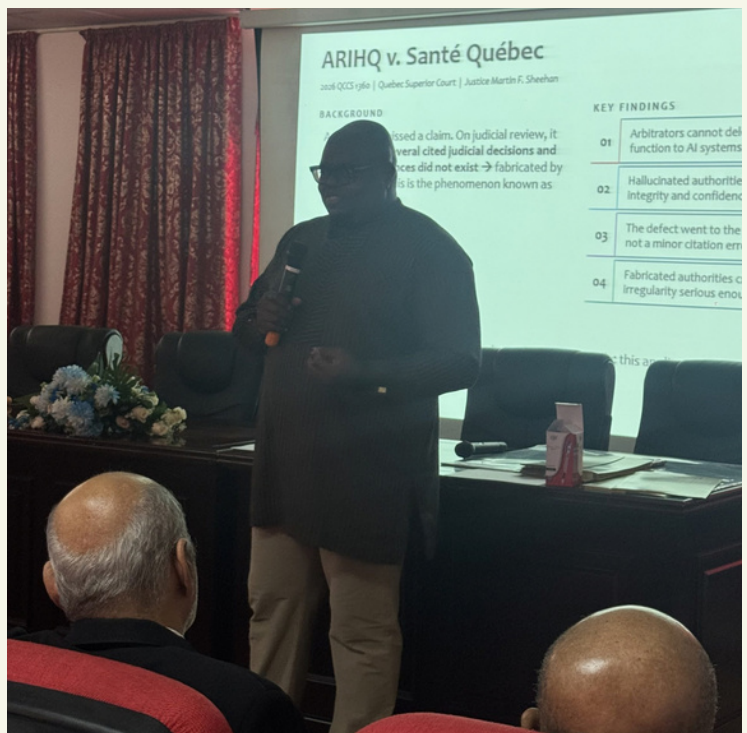
The Judiciary hosted a two-day training session focused on the responsible and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in legal and judicial work, bringing together Judicial Officers, Judicial Research Councils, and administrative teams.

The training, which took place on Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 May, was organised by the Judicial College (JUCOS) under the leadership of Supreme Court Judge, Melchior Vidot.

The Judiciary has observed the growing use of AI tools, with lawyers already relying on AI-assisted platforms in aspects of their work which highlights the importance of establishing clear guidelines and safeguards to ensure responsible use.

The sessions are being facilitated by Dr. Mugambi Laibuta, an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, trained mediator, legislative and policy analyst, and certified privacy and data protection professional. Dr. Laibuta completed his PhD in Law at the University of the Witwatersrand, with research focused on privacy rights and data protection regulation in Kenya. He currently teaches Legal Writing and Legislative Drafting at the Kenya School of Law and advises institutions across the public and private sectors on internationally recognised data protection principles.

The training explores emerging issues surrounding AI in judicial environments, including AI-related litigation, ethical considerations, accountability, disclosure obligations, and the importance of strengthening AI literacy within institutions.



JUDICIARY OFFICERS COMPLETE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME IN INDIA TO SUPPORT MODERNISATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Six officers from the Seychelles Judiciary have successfully completed an intensive two-week Capacity Building Programme in India aimed at strengthening governance, leadership, digital transformation, and public sector effectiveness, with valuable lessons expected to contribute to the Judiciary's ongoing modernisation efforts.

Conducted from 11–22 May 2026, the programme brought together middle and senior management officials from across the Seychelles public service and formed part of a wider initiative to strengthen institutional capacity and improve public sector performance. Representing the Judiciary were Deputy Registrar Marie Angel Barbe, Director of Human Resources Nichole Mathurin, Head of Information Technology Solomampionona Andriamiharisoa, Financial Controller Peggy Gill, Deputy Registrar of the Court of Appeal Vivienne Vadivello, and Secretary of the Fair Trading Tribunal Edwige Cadeau.



ANNUAL 'HOT SEAT' FORUM A SUCCESS

The Judiciary of Seychelles, in collaboration with the National Council for Children (NCC), proudly hosted the fourth edition of the annual "Hot Seat" Forum at the Palais de Justice in June, providing secondary school students with a unique opportunity to engage directly with legal professionals and ask candid questions about the justice system and careers in law.

This year's session featured Chief Magistrate Brigitte Confait in the "hot seat," supported by an accomplished all-female panel comprising legal practitioners Ms. Evelyne Almeida and Ms. Nissa Thompson. Together, the panel tackled a wide range of thoughtful and challenging questions posed by students, covering both professional and personal aspects of working within the legal field.



LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2026

The Judiciary kept its tradition of hosting the annual Long Service Awards, which recognizes staff who have completed certain years of service and those who have completed trainings in the previous year. This also serves as an opportunity to celebrate Labour Day. This year the event was hosted at Kempinski Resort. Below is a photo collage summarizing the evening, which included awards, dinner, and dancing.



CONSTITUTION DAY SYMPOSIUM 2026: “JUSTICE, DEMOCRACY, AND THE RULE OF LAW IN SEYCHELLES – 50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE AND 33 YEARS OF CONSTITUTIONALISM”

The Judiciary successfully hosted its annual Constitution Day Symposium on Wednesday, 16 June 2026, at the Palais de Justice, bringing together members of the Judiciary, the Bar, legal practitioners, and key justice sector stakeholders for a day of insightful dialogue under the theme: “Justice, Democracy, and the Rule of Law in Seychelles.”

The symposium opened with the first panel discussion focused on constitutionalism in Seychelles, featuring experienced attorneys Mr Philippe Boullé and Mr France Bonte, who explored the nation’s constitutional journey, examining where Seychelles has come from and where it is headed in safeguarding constitutional rights and upholding the principles enshrined in the Constitution. This was followed by a discussion time moderated by Supreme Court Judge Brassel Adeline.

The second panel shifted focus toward practical challenges and reforms within the justice system, with discussions centred on access to justice, legal aid, court modernisation, and the intersection between long-standing legal traditions and rapidly evolving technologies. This panel featured Attorney General Mr. Perrera, Ombudsman Mr. Robert Georges, and Judge of the Commercial Court, Mrs. Burian, each bringing valuable institutional perspectives to the discussion.

A second session of discussions was moderated by Supreme Court Judge Gustave Dodin. In a strong call to action, members of the Judiciary urged the stakeholders present to move discussions beyond theory and begin developing tangible solutions.



CHIEF JUSTICE ATTENDS TECHLAW FEST 2026 IN SINGAPORE AND EXPLORES AVENUES FOR COLLABORATION

The Chief Justice of Seychelles participated in TechLaw Fest 2026 in Singapore from 9-10 September, held at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre under the theme “From Foundation to Frontier: The Role of Law Amidst Change.” The event brought together legal professionals, policymakers, technologists and academics to explore how law and justice systems can respond to rapid technological and societal change.

The Chief Justice was accompanied by the Judiciary’s Director for Legal Affairs. Their participation provided an opportunity for the Seychelles Judiciary to learn more about judicial innovation and technology, particularly as Seychelles continues to modernise its justice system and incorporate technology into its processes and services.

During the visit, the delegation also held a series of high-level side meetings aimed at strengthening cooperation and exploring areas of mutual interest. Meetings were held with the Principal Judge and Registrar of the Singapore Courts’ Mediation Services to discuss potential collaboration in mediation and alternative dispute resolution. These discussions were particularly relevant to Seychelles as the Judiciary continues to encourage greater use of mediation and arbitration as alternatives to litigation.

Together with representatives of the Seychelles Law Commission, the delegation also met with representatives of the Singapore International Commercial Court, further exploring opportunities for knowledge exchange and cooperation in the development and promotion of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

A key highlight of the visit was the meeting with Chief Justice of Singapore, Sundaresh Menon, which provided an opportunity for the two judiciaries to exchange perspectives on judicial transformation, innovation and the evolving role of courts in a rapidly changing technological and legal environment.





SUPREME COURT PERIMETER SECURITY STRENGTHENED THROUGH NEW FENCING PROJECT

The Judiciary has welcomed the completion and formal handover of a new security fencing project at the Supreme Court, undertaken in collaboration with the Seychelles Infrastructure Agency (SIA) and contractor HPC Construction Pty Ltd.

The project focused on strengthening the perimeter security of the Supreme Court and improving the functionality and security of its access gates. The new fencing is higher than the previous structure, providing enhanced perimeter protection, while the upgraded gates offer improved opening, closing and securing mechanisms.

The formal handover was marked by the signing of the relevant project documents by Elsie Morel, Chief Operations Officer of the Seychelles Infrastructure Agency, and the Chief Justice. Ms. Morel was accompanied by Christina Henry, Lead Project Manager, and David Constance, Assistant Project Manager, who were involved in overseeing the project on behalf of SIA.

JUDICIARY COMPLETES MAJOR ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE AT PALAIS DE JUSTICE

The Judiciary has successfully completed a major upgrade to the electrical infrastructure at the Palais de Justice, following the installation and commissioning of a new Low Voltage Main Switch Board by Venora (Seychelles) Limited.

A handing over ceremony between representatives of Venora (Seychelles) Limited and the Chief Justice, including the Judiciary's Registrar of the Supreme Court and Director of Operations and Logistics Mr. Paul Derjacques, took place at the Palais de Justice on Wednesday 8 July 2026. The project was undertaken after a technical assessment identified the need to replace the existing electrical distribution system to improve its safety, reliability and long-term performance. The new installation will provide a more resilient power supply capable of supporting the current and future operational needs of the Court Complex.



PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL JUSTICE ANTHONY FERNANDO BIDS FAREWELL AFTER MORE THAN FOUR DECADES OF DISTINGUISHED LEGAL SERVICE



The Judiciary of Seychelles paid tribute to Justice Anthony Fernando during a special ceremonial sitting marking his retirement after an exceptional legal career spanning more than 40 years, including 17 years on the Bench.

Delivering an emotional farewell address, Justice Fernando reflected on a career dedicated to public service, beginning with his appointment as Senior State Counsel in 1991. He recounted his progression through the legal service, serving as Principal State Counsel, Attorney General for a decade, Judge of the Court of Appeal from 2009, and ultimately as President of the Court of Appeal since June 2020.

Reflecting on the different administrations under which he served, Justice Fernando remarked that despite changes in political leadership, every President had respected the independence of the Judiciary, allowing him to carry out his duties “with impartiality, with integrity, and with absolute independence.”

He also reflected on the unique responsibilities of serving as Attorney General, describing the office as one that demands a careful balance between advising Government, leading prosecutions and safeguarding the public interest and the rule of law.

Looking back on his tenure as President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Fernando spoke proudly of one of the Judiciary’s most significant achievements. Upon assuming office in 2020, the Court faced a backlog of more than 200 pending appeals. Through sustained commitment and teamwork, the Court has since disposed of 766 appeal cases, significantly improving the efficiency of the appellate system.

Justice Fernando paid heartfelt tribute to the many people who had supported him throughout his journey. He expressed his sincere appreciation to his judicial colleagues, members of the legal profession and the administrative staff of the Judiciary, acknowledging their collective contribution to the institution’s success.

In a touching moment that resonated throughout the courtroom, Justice Fernando recognised the Judiciary’s senior management team, describing them as “the engine of this institution. Without you, nothing moves.”

His most emotional tribute, however, was reserved for his wife, who was seated in the front row throughout the ceremony. Turning to her, he simply said, “None of this would be possible without you,” drawing visible emotion from those in attendance.

Leading the tributes, Chief Justice Ronny Govinden joined the Bench to honour Justice Fernando’s distinguished career and lasting contribution to the administration of justice in Seychelles. Tributes were also delivered by Chairperson of the Bar Association, Divino Sabino, and senior attorney Bernard Georges, both of whom reflected on Justice Fernando’s influence on the legal profession.

PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL JUSTICE ANTHONY FERNANDO BIDS FAREWELL AFTER MORE THAN FOUR DECADES OF DISTINGUISHED LEGAL SERVICE

The retirement celebrations began over the weekend, when the Judiciary's Senior Management hosted a farewell dinner in Justice Fernando's honour, attended by the Supreme Court Judges and members of the Judiciary, providing colleagues with an opportunity to celebrate his remarkable career in a more personal setting.

His internal staff also hosted a small gathering to show their appreciation of his time at the Judiciary.

As Justice Anthony Fernando steps away from the Bench, he leaves behind an enduring legacy of judicial independence, integrity and public service. His leadership, commitment to the rule of law and dedication to strengthening the administration of justice have left an indelible mark on the Judiciary of Seychelles and the country's legal profession. The Judiciary of Seychelles extends its sincere gratitude to Justice Fernando for his outstanding service and wishes him every happiness, good health and fulfilment in his well-earned retirement.

Justice Fernando's full farewell speech can be read in full on our Judiciary website.



LA DIGUE COURT OFFICIALLY REOPENS FOLLOWING MAJOR REVAMP

The Judiciary of Seychelles officially reopened the La Digue Court in La Passe on Monday, 31 August 2026, marking an important milestone in efforts to strengthen access to justice and provide the La Digue community with a safer, more modern and suitable court facility. The reopening ceremony brought together invited guests and stakeholders, including representatives from the Seychelles Infrastructure Agency (SIA), Members of the National Assembly, representatives of Government, members of the Judiciary, the legal profession and the La Digue community.

The ceremony was formally opened by the Chief Justice, who highlighted the importance of the Court to the people of La Digue and thanked the various individuals and organisations whose contributions helped make the renovation project possible.

The official reopening was marked by the unveiling of a commemorative plaque by the Chief Justice and the Registrar of the Supreme Court, followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by the Chief Justice and the District Administrator of La Digue.

The newly refurbished facility was subsequently blessed by Father Christian Toulon, before the first case was called in the renewed courtroom before Magistrate Emily Gonthier, formally marking the return of judicial proceedings to the Court.

The renovation has significantly improved the Court's environment and functionality, addressing longstanding structural and infrastructure concerns while creating a more appropriate space for judicial officers, staff, legal practitioners and members of the public.

The Seychelles Infrastructure Agency (SIA) officially handed over the newly revamped La Digue Magistrate Court project to the Judiciary of Seychelles on Friday, 28 August 2026, during a ceremony held at the Palais de Justice.



OUTREACH - MAKING THE COURTS MORE VISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS

On Tuesday 18 August, a group of students from the School of Advanced Level Studies (SALS) had the wonderful opportunity to step inside the Judiciary of Seychelles and gain a closer look at the work behind the robes and courtrooms.

The visit featured an insightful talk and brief Q&A with Supreme Court Judge Brassel Adeline, followed by a guided tour with our Public Relations Officer. A great morning of learning, curiosity, and seeing the justice system in action

On Wednesday 19 August, a group of military recruits who will, in the coming months, take their oaths as official soldiers paid their first visit to the Judiciary to gain a deeper understanding of the role and functions of the courts within the justice system.

As part of their educational visit, the recruits took a guided tour of the Judiciary's premises with the Public Relations Officer, learning more about the work carried out across the institution and the important role of the courts in upholding the rule of law.

A highlight of the visit was the opportunity to meet the Chief Justice, who engaged with the recruits and answered their pertinent questions on the law, his journey to the role of Chief Justice, and his experiences on the Bench.

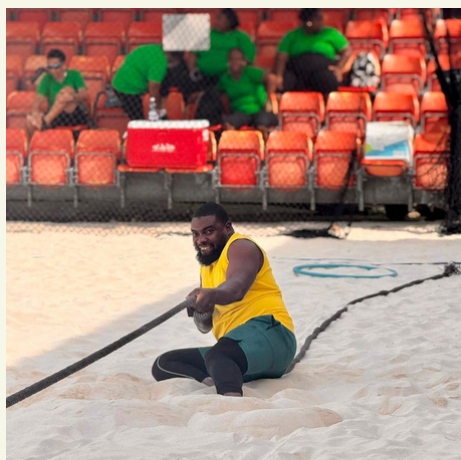


JUDICIARY SPORTS DAY

Colleagues from across the Judiciary came together for our annual Sport and Games Day at Roche Caiman on Friday 21 August. This day is dedicated to teamwork, fitness, camaraderie and, most importantly, having fun together.

For staff who spend much of their working lives in serious court settings, guided by formal protocols and the demands of justice, taking a step away from that environment is both refreshing and important. Sport and fun activities give us the opportunity to let loose and connect with colleagues beyond our usual departments and build trust in a relaxed and positive atmosphere.

From the first game to the final challenge, every team gave it their all! We saw impressive teamwork, individual performances, great sportsmanship and, perhaps most importantly, colleagues cheering on and supporting their teammates every step of the way. Days like these remind us that while we work in different departments and carry different responsibilities, we are one Judiciary.



NEW ATTORNEYS CALLED TO THE BAR

On Monday 13 April, Joanna Mussard was formally called to the Bar during a ceremony held at the Palais de Justice, before the Chief Justice.



Ms. Sophie Vel was officially called to the Bar during a ceremony held in Court 1 of the Palais de Justice in May 2026, marking an important milestone in her legal career.



Ms. Debbie Mills and Ms. Dericka Arrisol were formally admitted as Attorneys-at-Law on Thursday 25 June following the successful completion of the academic and professional requirements prescribed under the Legal Practitioners Act.



On Tuesday 21 July, Sunil Lafortune was formally called to the Bar during a ceremony held in Courtroom 1 of the Supreme Court before the Chief Justice.



THANK YOU!

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