

## Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong to retire, successor named

**YAHOO! NEWS** By Fann Sim | Yahoo! Newsroom – Wed, Aug 29, 2012



Yahoo! Newsroom - Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong is set to retire after six years as Chief Justice. Sundaresh Menon, Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court, has been named as his successor. (Yahoo! file photo)

The President, acting in his discretion, and in concurrence with the advice of the Prime Minister, appointed Sundaresh as the Chief Justice with effect 6 November 2012, according to a press release from the [Prime Minister's Office \(PMO\)](#).

Chan, who has served as Chief Justice in the past six years, will retire on the same day after he reaches his 75th birthday.

In a written statement, the outgoing Chief Justice said that "being in the public service for 26 years has been a great honour and privilege given to few. I have found this opportunity to serve Singapore to be immensely meaningful and satisfying".

Commenting on his appointment Menon said, "I am greatly honoured and privileged to be entrusted with this awesome responsibility; and humbled by the calibre of those who have been so entrusted before me."

While Menon had been seen as a front-runner for the post of Chief Justice when Chan was expected to retire, his appointment just one month as Judge of Appeal and that after serving about 21 months as Attorney General had come as a surprise to some.

In email comments to Yahoo! Singapore, Nominated Member of Parliament and Singapore Management University assistant professor Eugene Tan noted that the appointment will

mean that, for the first time since 1990, Singapore will have a Chief Justice with security of tenure to 65 years of age.

Prior to that, Chief Justices Yong Pung How and Chan Sek Seong were appointed for a fixed period as they were above the mandatory of retirement age of 65, he noted.

"So we are looking to Justice Menon helming the Judiciary for the next 15 years," he said.

"He assumes the Chief Justiceship at a time when Singapore is at the crossroads - politically, economically and socially," he observed. "It is imperative that the Judiciary keeps abreast of the societal changes while also mindful of the need for the legal and judicial system to maintain its high standing, legitimacy and trust."

On Menon's appointment, National University of Singapore law professor [Thio Li-Ann](#) said she was surprised at the relative shortness of his tenure as Attorney-General.

Based on her limited interaction with him and the judgments she has read, however, she described him as someone who is an "extremely capable, intelligent and active person who commands and enjoys the respect of the legal fraternity."

"He is an excellent choice and I have high expectations about the jurisprudence that will emanate from the Menon bench, building upon the positive developments we have already witnessed under the Chan bench," she told Yahoo! Singapore.

Lee Eng Beng, senior counsel and managing partner of prestigious local law firm Rajah & Tann, said the appointment was a cause for cheer and celebration for the legal community.

"Under Chief Justice Chan, our judicial system has developed and matured into a reputable, reliable and effective institution of the highest international standards in the administration of justice. Menon will no doubt be a befitting successor to Chief Justice Chan," Lee said in a statement to the media.

"He has that extremely rare combination of intellect, wisdom, integrity and personality, a strong sense of justice and principle, awe-inspiring legal and oratorical skills, and an enormous work capacity matched only by his drive and focus," he added.