

## NEW LEGAL YEAR



(from left) Goh Yihan, dean of the Singapore Management University's (SMU) School of Law; Abraham Vergis, founder and managing director of Providence Law Asia; and Kristy Tan, senior director of the AGC's advocacy group. PHOTOS: SINGAPORE ACADEMY OF LAW

# New Senior Counsel appointed from public, private and academic sectors

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### Singapore

THREE Senior Counsel have been appointed for the new legal year, including a managing director of a boutique law firm, a legal eagle in the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) and a law academic.

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon announced the appointments for Abraham Vergis, founder and managing director of Providence Law Asia; Kristy Tan, senior director of the AGC's advocacy group; and Goh Yihan, dean of the Singapore Management University's (SMU) School of Law, at the opening of Legal Year 2021 on Monday.

The trio join the elite ranks of Singapore's equivalent of Britain's Queen's Counsel, who at the latest count stand at 91.

In a media conference before their appointments were announced, the three newly-minted Senior Counsel spoke of their interest in mentoring

young legal practitioners and aspiring lawyers.

Mr Vergis, who spent 13 years at Big Four firm Drew & Napier before starting up his own firm in 2012, said he hopes to encourage young lawyers to be more "creative" in their approach to law, noting that he practises now in a boutique law firm. Providence Law Asia specialises in cross-border dispute resolution.

"I think my appointment is meaningful to people insofar as they come to realise that there is more than one way to make it to Senior Counsel... You don't have to follow the conventional way to make it," said the 46-year-old, who also previously served as chairman of the Law Society's Criminal Legal Aid Scheme committee.

Ms Tan, 39, was called to the Singapore Bar in 2005 and made equity partner of Big Four firm Allen & Gledhill eight years later. She joined the legal service in 2018 and now oversees the AGC's conduct of litigation and dispute matters in civil, commercial, criminal and public law.

Ms Tan said she hopes to continue to excite young lawyers and to demonstrate different possibilities in the practise of law.

Prof Goh, also 39, served as a Justices' law clerk and assistant registrar at the High Court before entering academia. Further to his role as dean at the SMU's School of Law, Prof Goh also sits on the boards of the Singapore Institute of Legal Education and the Singapore Judicial College.

Prof Goh said he hopes to inspire aspiring lawyers through his day-to-day teaching, as well as to nurture the next generation of legal academics in faculties across the country.

The Senior Counsel scheme in Singapore was established in 1997. Applications are made personally. The past year's applications were reviewed by a committee comprising five High Court justices, including Chief Justice Menon, as well as attorney-general Lucien Wong. Senior Counsel wear silk robes in court, which is why the elite appointment is often referred to as "taking the silk".