Improving on a formidable legacy

SPEECH BY NEW CHIEF JUSTICE CHAN SEK KEONG

THREE THINGS ARE ESSENTIAL TO BE A SUCCESSFUL JUDGE: WISDOM, HONESTY AND COURAGE.

THREE THINGS NOT TO BE A JUDGE: A LACK OF RESPECT, A MAN OF WORDS, AND A MAN OF FEARS.

JUDICATURE IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS. JUDGES CAN PLAY A ROLE TO REDUCE TENSIONS, BUT NOT TO RESOLVE THEM.

THREES things are essential to be a successful judge: wisdom, honesty and courage. Three things not to be a judge: a lack of respect, a man of words, and a man of fears. The judicature is not a substitute for other institutions. Judges can play a role to reduce tensions, but not to resolve them.

The three things essential to be a successful judge are:

1. Wisdom: To cut through the complexities of law and facts, to see the big picture, to make difficult decisions.
2. Honesty: To act with integrity, to be impartial, to avoid conflicts of interest.
3. Courage: To stand up for what is right, to make tough decisions, to resist pressure.

The three things not to be a judge are:

1. A lack of respect: To dismiss the views of others, to be arrogant, to be dismissive of others.
2. A man of words: To speak without thinking, to make empty promises, to lack substance.
3. A man of fears: To be timid, to avoid responsibility, to lack courage.

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