

7th June 2005

PRESS STATEMENT

The reports in the press mention **Wee Chong Jin** as the first Asian High Court Judge and the first Asian Chief Justice.

Mr Wee was **not** the first Asian Judge. It was **TAN AH TAH**, promoted from his post as District Judge and First Magistrate in 1954/55, who was the first Asian Judge. Tan Ah Tah was also the first Asian to preside as the Chief Justice. His appointment, however; was short lived. He acted as Chief Justice for about three/four months before he was replaced by **Alan Rose**.

The reports speak of Wee's career on the Bench and of his judgments. No mention, however, has been made of the one thing by which Wee will be chiefly remembered – his removal in 1985 of Michael Khoo, the then Senior District Judge, from his office after Michael Khoo acquitted Jeyaretnam, the Opposition MP, on three charges. Wee went on to overturn the acquittals leading finally to Jeyaretnam's removal from Parliament. ***The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in a judgment in 1988, described all the convictions as a miscarriage of justice and severely criticized Mr. Wee.***

By:

(Ng Teck Siong)

from the office of Mr. JB Jeyaretnam