

Johannes Hadi
Partner

Bachelor of Laws, Honours (2nd Class, Upper Division)
University College London (2014)

Master of Sciences, Political Theory (Distinction)
London School of Economics and Political Science (2015)

Accredited Mediator
Singapore Mediation Centre (2020)

Admitted to the Singapore Bar (2018)

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ABOUT JOHANNES

Johannes is “*highly recommended*” by clients as a “*top notch*” litigator who has a “*persuasive way with words*” and is “*always well-prepared*”.

He is a disputes specialist, focusing on civil and commercial litigation, criminal litigation, and contentious investigations. He has been successful at all levels of the courts up to the Court of Appeal, from high-profile acquittals at first instance to landmark appellate decisions in novel or publicly important areas of the law.

His civil and commercial practice centres on banking and financing disputes, employment disputes, shareholders and directors’ issues, and enforcement of creditors’ rights. He recently acted as lead counsel for a private investor in a High Court investment dispute arising from the initial public offering of GoTo Group, a merger between Indonesian ride-hailing giant Gojek and e-commerce company Tokopedia, and successfully obtained judgment against the defendant company for the entire claim of S\$1.5 million.

His criminal practice covers complex international fraud, corruption and money-laundering, and other serious crimes like murder, sexual assault and drug trafficking. His cases are frequently reported in the law reports and the press.

He recently advised a director of a local company in investigations by the Commercial Affairs Department into fraud allegations involving more than US\$1 billion, in what was described as the “*highest-profile corporate investigation under way*” in Singapore at the time. He has also successfully guided clients through investigations and disciplinary proceedings by bodies such as the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA), Council for Estate Agencies (CEA), Singapore Medical Council (SMC), and CPA Australia (formerly known as the Incorporated Institute of Accountants in Australia).

Johannes read law at University College London (UCL) where he won the inaugural inter-university Human Rights Moot 2014. He then topped his cohort in several classes at the London School of Economics (LSE), where he graduated with a Master of Science (Distinction) in political theory.

Significant Civil and Commercial Litigation

- **Investments.** Acted as lead counsel for a private investor in a High Court investment dispute arising from the public listing of GoTo Group, a merger between Indonesian ride-hailing giant Gojek and e-commerce company Tokopedia — which made international headlines in 2022 for being one of the world's largest initial public offerings that year for raising more than S\$1 billion — and successfully obtained judgment against the defendant company for the entire claim of S\$1.5 million.
- **Employment, Tort.** *Ramesh s/o Krishnan v AXA Life Insurance Singapore Pte Ltd* (CA/CA 38/2018): Assisted in acting for a senior financial services director in a negligence claim against his former employer. This was a landmark tort case, in which the Singapore Court of Appeal held for the first time that employers owe employees a duty of care when preparing performance reviews to ensure that any facts stated were true and any opinions expressed were supported by true facts. The Court of Appeal awarded damages at S\$3.2 million.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Singapore court awards man \\$3 million after bad reference denies him new job](#)

- **Fraud, Tort.** *Rohini d/o Balasubramaniam v HSR International Realtors Pte Ltd* [2018] SGCA 37: Assisted in defending a real estate agency against an S\$830,000 claim brought by the plaintiff, who argued that the agency should be held vicariously liable for the fraudulent acts of a rogue agent, with substantial success.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Woman loses suit against property agency whose rogue agent embezzled \\$830k from her](#)

- **Family.** *UFN v UFM and another matter* [2019] SGCA 54: Acted for the respondent in the first case in Singapore for financial relief consequent upon a foreign divorce under Chapter 4A of the Women's Charter. Successfully obtained judgment on novel questions of matrimonial law of public interest including: (a) the extent to which a foreign divorcee's decision not to exhaust remedies in a foreign matrimonial jurisdiction precludes an application for financial relief in Singapore under Chapter 4A of the Women's Charter; and (b) the applicability of the *forums conveniens* doctrine to the Singapore courts' exercise of discretion to allow financial relief.

Significant Criminal Litigation

- **Corruption.** *Public Prosecutor v Liang An Wey* [2023] SGDC 273: Acted for a former senior vice-president of Singapore Post accused of corruption and cheating.

Published Judgment: [District Court](#)

Media Coverage: [Jail for former SingPost senior V-P for seeking \\$1m bribe, cheating to get higher pay](#)

- **Corruption.** *Public Prosecutor v Ananthakrishnan Nanda*: Acted for a former managing director at Sinochem Shipping accused of corruption.

Media Coverage: [Ex-ship management company director pleads guilty to 5 corruption charges](#)

- **Corruption.** *Public Prosecutor v Low Jun Jie Lionel*: Acted for a former assistant manager of Singapore Airlines accused of corruption.

Media Coverage: [Ex-SIA employee jailed 10 months for corruption, using ill-gotten gains to buy Microsoft shares](#)

- **Market Abuse.** Acted for an individual charged with insider trading under the Securities and Future Act, in a matter related to the prosecution of former executives of the Catalist-listed Oriental Group Limited for *inter alia* cheating, false trading and market rigging transactions, and employing manipulative and deceptive devices in connection with transactions of capital markets products.

Media Coverage: [Ex-CEO of Oriental Group Limited who left Singapore after leading market-rigging scheme jailed](#)

- **Market Abuse.** Acted for two individuals accused of insider trading arising from DuluxGroup's proposed acquisition by Nippon Paint Holdings in 2019.

Media Coverage: [Ex-senior V-P of Nippon Paint subsidiary, his sister and husband face insider trading charges](#)

- **Murder.** *Teo Ghim Heng v Public Prosecutor* [2022] SGCA 10: Acted for the accused in the Woodlands double murder case, at trial and on appeal.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Woodlands double murder: Man facing death sentence for killing pregnant wife and daughter mounts appeal](#)

- **Murder.** *Public Prosecutor v Ahmad Muin Yaacob*: Acted for the accused in the Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal murder case, and persuaded the Court to impose life imprisonment instead of the death sentence.

Media Coverage: [Man who killed supervisor, dumped her body in drain gets life imprisonment and caning](#)

- **Drug Trafficking.** *Roszaidi bin Osman v Public Prosecutor* [2022] SGCA 75: Successfully persuaded the Court of Appeal, in a 3:2 split decision, to reduce a drug courier's death sentence to life imprisonment on the basis of psychiatric evidence of diminished responsibility.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Drug courier's death penalty reduced to life imprisonment in split decision by Court of Appeal](#)

- **Drug Trafficking.** *Ramadass Punnusamy v Public Prosecutor* [2022] SGCA 45: Successfully obtained the acquittal of a man initially convicted of drug trafficking.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Court of Appeal acquits man on death row accused of trafficking 1.8kg of cannabis](#)

- **Drug Trafficking.** *Ilechukwu Uchechukwu Chukwudi v Public Prosecutor* [2020] SGCA 90: Successfully obtained the acquittal of a Nigerian man initially convicted of drug trafficking and sentenced to death. For the first time in Singapore's history, the Court of Appeal agreed to re-open an already concluded criminal appeal correct a miscarriage of justice.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [S'pore apex court acquits Nigerian man of drug trafficking in rare reversal of its own decision](#)

- **Drug Trafficking.** *Nagaenthiran a/l K Dharmalingam v Public Prosecutor and another appeal* [2019] SGCA 37: Acted for an accused person who was convicted of a capital drug trafficking offence in judicial review proceedings against the decision of the Public Prosecutor not to issue a certificate of substantive assistance under section 33B(2)(b) of the Misuse of Drugs Act (the "MDA"). The Government argued that section 33B(4) of the MDA was an ouster clause that limited the full scope of judicial review over the exercise of the Public Prosecutor's discretionary power. On appeal, we successfully persuaded the Court of Appeal that section 33B(4) of the MDA did not have the effect of ousting the court's powers of judicial review on grounds other than bad faith, malice, or unconstitutionality. We also acted for the client in an appeal against his death sentence, resulting to the Court of Appeal's seminal judgment which clarified the proper interpretation of the phrase "*abnormality of mind*" under section 33B(3)(b) of the MDA.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Apex court dismisses appeals by Malaysian man on death row for 9 years for importing drugs](#)

- **Sex Crime.** *Public Prosecutor v Yeo Sow Nam*: Successfully obtained the acquittal of a prominent doctor accused of molest. Midway through the trial, and after we cross-examined the complainant, the Prosecution applied to discontinue the case and granted the doctor a discharge of the charges amounting to an acquittal.

Media Coverage: [Doctor acquitted of molesting woman after she admits to lying in court](#)

- **Sex Crime.** *Public Prosecutor v Wee Teong Boo* [2020] SGCA 56: Successfully obtained the acquittal of a doctor charged with rape and molest.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Court of Appeal acquits doctor of sexually assaulting and molesting patient in clinic](#)

Significant Public Interest Litigation

- **Fundamental Liberties.** *Tan Seng Kee v Attorney-General and other appeals* [2022] SGCA 16 and *Ong Ming Johnson v Attorney-General and other matters* [2020] SGHC 63: Acted for a plaintiff in a challenge against the constitutionality of section 377A of the Penal Code, which criminalises consensual sex between adult men in private. After the appeal was decided, the Government of Singapore announced that it would move Parliament to repeal section 377A.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [S377A officially repealed after President Halimah gives assent to Bill](#)

- **Protests and Assemblies.** *Wham Kwok Han Jolovan v Public Prosecutor* [2020] SGCA 111: Acted for a prominent political activist in a criminal reference following his conviction for organising and holding a public assembly without a permit under the Public Order Act (the “POA”). The question of law of public interest posed to the Court of Appeal was — *is section 16(1)(a) of the Public Order Act a constitutionally valid derogation from Article 14(1) of the Constitution?* In its seminal judgment, the Court of Appeal set out a three-step test for determining whether a law impermissibly derogates from Article 14 of the Constitution.

Reported Judgment: [Court of Appeal](#)

Media Coverage: [Activist Jolovan Wham chooses 16 days' jail over fine for assembly without permit, refusing to sign police statement](#)

Talks & Publications:

- “*Singapore: An Introduction to Corporate Investigations / Anti-Corruption: Domestic*”, Chambers Asia-Pacific 2023 Practice Area Overview
- Judge in the International Mediation Singapore Competition (October 2021)
- “*How to Excel in the Second Chair*”, Singapore Law Gazette (June 2021)
- “*Truth, Finality, and Justice: The Singapore Court’s Balancing Act in Capital Punishment Cases*” Lecture, Singapore Management University School of Law, delivered on 27 August 2020
- “*Section 377A: Singapore’s Long Road to Decriminalisation of Homosexuality*” Talk, Yangon Pride Festival, Myanmar, delivered on 1 February 2020

Professional Appointments:

- Member, Criminal Practice Committee, Law Society of Singapore
- Member, Criminal Justice Working Group, Professional Affairs Committee
- Member, Young Members Working Group, Professional Affairs Committee
- Counsel, Legal Assistance for Capital Offences Scheme (LASCO)
- Counsel, Criminal Legal Aid Scheme (CLAS)