

THE SUPREME COURT GOES ONLINE

The Supreme Court has gone online for the first time and the website can be accessed through www.supremecourt.lk

The website was launched by His Lordship the Chief Justice, Hon Asoka N De Silva, at a simple ceremony at the Supreme Court held on 27th October 2010 in the presence of Hon Attorney General, Mohan Pieris, PC, Judges of the Supreme Court, President Court of Appeal, Judges of the Court of Appeal. The Secretary to the President, Secretary Ministry of Justice, the Chairman and Snr Officials of the ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA) and the Registrars of Supreme Court and Court of Appeal were also present.

Currently the website contains the Daily Court List, containing information about the cases to be taken up in the two benches of the Supreme Court (Court No. 502 and Court No. 403) daily. Initially considered Decisions of the Supreme Court delivered during 2010 as well as 2009, currently available in electronic format, would be available on the website. The Judgements will be updated as and when electronic versions of the judgements are made available and eventually searching facilities would be available. The Site also contains the Supreme Court Rules (as amended) and also a brief description and history of the Supreme Court. Information about the suspension of sittings of the Supreme Court, including the latest determination under Rule 62 is posted on the website.

The site is currently hosted and maintained with the technical assistance of ICTA. But eventually its operations and maintenance will be transferred to the Supreme Court, once the required infrastructure is in place. The Registrar of the Supreme Court has already given leadership to this process. Giving an overview of the contents of the website, officials of ICTA explained that the creation of this site is only just an initial first step. Eventually further features will be added. For instance the daily court list of Supreme Court would be made available through SMS to any SMS enabled phone by sending a SMS to a specific phone number. It was explained that there is room for improvement and that the first month of its operation could be used as an opportunity to refine and update its contents as well as to check its resilience.

Speaking at the event His Lordship the Chief Justice mentioned his experience in other countries where a judgement of the highest court is available at the click of a button. His Lordship said it was time that this was achieved in Sri Lanka and thanked Prof P W Easinghe, Chairman ICTA and his staff Reshan Dewapura, CEO, Jayantha Fernando, Director/ Legal Advisor and Messrs Wasantha Deshapriya, D C Dissanayake and Ganesh Wijenaik, who had worked closely with the Judges of the Court as well as Court of Appeal, Mrs. M.M. Jayasekara, Registrar Supreme Court and Ms. Anandhi Kanagaratnam, Secretary to Chief Justice to make this a reality.