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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, INCHE SHA'ARI TADIL, AT THE
INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE FORMATION OF KAMPONG CHAI
CHEE HEALTH PROMOTION ASSOCIATION HELD AT THE SENNETT
SECONDARY SCHOOL ON SATURDAY, MARCH 1, AT 5 P.M.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to be present at the inaugural ceremony to mark the formation of the Kampong Chai Chee Health Promotion Association.

The background of the formation of the Kampong Chai Chee Health Promotion Association could be traced back to more than three months ago. It was in October 1968 that the idea was first mooted. You will recall that a protem committee was set up. The necessity for such an association was investigated. After mature consideration, it was decided to go ahead with the idea. Today, we have this opportunity of seeing the idea come to fruition at this inaugural ceremony of the association when office-bearers will be selected. It is only after this that the Kampong Chai Chee Health Promotion Association can really start clicking, and thus play a role in transforming the constituency into a better place to live in.

The formation of the Kampong Chai Chee Health Promotion Association does not imply shortcomings on the part of the Health Ministry or radio and television mass media. The Ministry of Health will continue to play its role of safeguarding the overall environmental health of our Republic, that is, including our constituency. The mass media of radio and television will also continue to endeavour to cultivate in our citizens habits of cleanliness and personal hygiene and good environmental health.

But these are national institutions - meaning that they can only cater to the general needs of the Republic as a whole. Where special needs due to special circumstances arise, these can only be redressed at constituency level on the basis of self-help. In other words, the formation of the Kampong Chai Chee Health Promotion Association provides constituents the opportunity to help themselves enjoy better health and to live in healthier surroundings.

As you know, our constituency is an underdeveloped constituency, or to use an euphenistic term, a developing constituency. There are, therefore, several factors peculiar to it, and are not to be found in the more developed and urbanised constituencies. First of all, a great many people are classified as belonging to the prepared food-supply service industry. Quite a number of people are directly engaged in the feed-producing

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industry such as vegetable and poultry farming. It is no surprise that the literacy rate amongst the more elderly people in this area is below par as compared to other constituencies. Added to these is the terrain of the area which is largely undeveloped and unplanned. The total result is environmental health that could be further improved - spitting and littering in public places, dirty coffeeshops and food stalls, plenty of mosquito breeding grounds, etc.

These are the initial targets of our association. After the battle against these is over, we must help create a better Kampong Chai Thee - that is, a more beautiful place to live in by building simple landmarks, planting more trees, building better homes and generally beautifying our surroundings as a whole.

In the meantime, first things must come first. In view of the special difficulties peculiar to this area, we may have to start off by holding exhibitions and cinema shows and distributing pamphlets to inculcate higher standards of health. We may even have to form an inspection squadron to make frequent rounds of individual houses, offering suggestions and providing practical instruction in various aspects of health. We must remember that this should be done on the basis of persuasion and example. There is no question of compulsion. This means hard work and a lot of public relations and tact on the part of committee members and their fellow voluntary workers.

The duties of the association do not stop at this point. It is up to the committee members to learn as much about public health as possible so that they can instruct others. I am sure that there are health and medical experts in our midst who can provide authoritative knowledge on the subject. It is only by knowing the subject well that others can respect you.

May I remind the committee and other members of the association that they can always air their views and offer constructive ideas and suggestions. It is only by being actively interested and on the basis of practical action and intelligent awareness that this association can achieve its objectives.

May I congratulate the would-be members of the committee of the association, and wish them well beforehand.

MARCH 1, 1969.

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