

EMBARGOED TILL AFTER DELIVERY

SPEECH BY TUAN HAJI YA'ACOB BIN MOHAMED, MINISTER OF STATE (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) AT THE OPENING OF "WATER IS PRECIOUS" EXHIBITION ON SAT 17 APR 76 AT 8.00 P.M. AT KAMPONG UBI COMMUNITY CENTRE

We can consider ourselves to be more fortunate than most of the Third World countries where water supply is inadequate and poor in quality.

We in Singapore get fresh drinking water of high quality at the turn of the tap. Water comes to us so easily that we have taken it for granted. As a result, we have become complacent and this attitude is reflected in rising consumption particularly in the last few months.

Statistics show that the consumption of water is steadily increasing from year to year. The last two decades saw gross water consumption increasing from 136,000 cubic metres per day in 1950 to 585,000 cubic metres per day in 1975. In the first two months of this year daily consumption was nearer 600,000 cubic metres.

The two main factors which contribute to the considerable increase in water consumption are population growth and rapid commercial/ industrial development. Associated with population increase are rapid urbanisation, housing development and the rising standard of living as a result of the tremendous economic development in the Republic in recent years.

More water will have to be produced to meet the ever increasing demand at a rapidly escalating cost; in other words more costly water because of heavy capital expenditure on new reservoirs for storage of raw water, new treatment plants to treat raw water before it can be safe for human consumption, more pumps to pump treated water to new service reservoirs, and more distribution mains to carry the increased load of water to the increasing number of consumers.

All this means that water will become very expensive and notwithstanding cost, we will run out of possible sources because as you know Singapore is a small island without a massive hinterland of available catchment areas.

We therefore cannot afford to remain complacent. Our projections

have revealed that the demand for water will rise to 745,000 cubic metres per day in another three years' time and in 1980 the daily water demand will surpass 850,000 cubic metres per day. We must remember that water is precious and each of us must do his part in what must be a national effort to save water.

Good habits in the use of water must be adopted. Many people are unaware that much water is wasted when they wash plates, vegetables and clothes under a running tap. In this instance, use a wash basin or container.

Most of us may be surprised to know that a 10-minute shower may use up 91 - 136 litres of water. A shower which exceeds ten minutes will obviously use up more water. Save water by limiting yourself to a 5 or 10-minute shower, controlling the volume of water and turning off the tap while soaping.

Instal a dual-flush cistern for the toilet. Snappy pull uses 4.5 litres of water for a flush while a prolonged pull uses 9.1 litres. Even without the dual-flush cistern, you can save water by not flushing the toilet after every minor use. In Singapore, there are about 300,000 toilet flushing cisterns - most of them of the 9 litre and 13.6 litre-types. With one pull less a day for each cistern, 2,700 to 41,000 cubic metres of precious water may be saved.

Use of water for the watering of plants and lawns and for washing cars should be minimised.

Regular inspection of the household plumbing system to check all taps and pipes for leakage, toilet cisterns for overflow and timely replacement of worn-out washers or defective fixtures will prevent unnecessary wastage. A slowly dripping tap may waste over 454 litres of water per day. A fast dripping tap wastes as much as 3,637 litres per day which amounts to more than \$1.30 a day at the first block of the domestic tariff.

Remember, the next time you allow water to run to waste, you are in fact allowing your money to go to waste. Saving water will be a help to your pocket.

Finally we should make it a habit to save water in our daily life because by doing so we will be making a contribution towards national effort.

Make this slogan your Motto "Save Water before It Is Rationed" as water is precious and is a source of life.

APRIL 17, 1976.