

TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (HOME AFFAIRS),
MR. LIM GUAN HOO, AT THE VIGILANTE CORPS FIRST SEA CARNIVAL
AT EAST COAST LAGOON ON SATURDAY, JULY 17, 1976 AT 2 P.M.

I am deeply honoured to have been invited to declare open this first Sea Carnival organised by the Vigilante Corps. This carnival is yet another grand event of the corps this year after the variety concert in March and the civil defence display last month.

Ours is an island Republic surrounded by the sea and aquatic sports are very popular among the people. During weekends and public holidays, our beaches are crowded with swimmers and holiday makers. Man-made lagoons have also been built to provide additional pastime resorts. Cases of drowning and other mishaps however did occur in the past and may recur in future. Such mishaps and waste of human life could be greatly minimised if proper precautionary measures are taken.

In this connection, I am glad that the Central Base of the Vigilante Corps has made adjustments to its manpower planning to increase the strength of its lifeguard unit. The unit was formed in February 1974, and in just a matter of two years, it has grown from a modest of 12 members to the present strength of 300 members. Further, I am happy to note that these lifeguards have over these two years saved a total of 41 lives.

The VC Lifeguard Unit now covers a wide scope of the life saving service in our Republic, stretching from Changi Beach down over to Sentosa Lagoon as well as this East Coast Lagoon. Soon it will extend its services to Kusu Island and St. John's Island. The VC Lifeguards have been frequently invited by various Government departments, statutory boards and private organisers to give services. To meet the increasing demand, it is necessary for the unit to be expanded to be a 1000-strong lifeguard organisation in the foreseeable future. The 120 new lifeguards who have undergone an eight-month-long strenuous training and have thus been qualified for the Bronze Medallion Certificates are a source of the added impetus towards this objective. Let us hope that members of the

Lifeguard Unit2/-

Lifeguard Unit will continue to uphold the VC motto - "From each His Best" - in performing their duties.

In today's Sea Carnival, members of the Marine Units of the VC Central Base will show you what they have learnt. Apart from life saving, the marine units are also trained in specialised activities including sailing, canoeing, water-polo, swimming and cutter sailing. Among these, cutter sailing is the most ambitious venture. It is one of the new areas of activity the VC has entered recently. It is a team effort on a large sailing ship capable of long expeditions in the open sea. Trainees will learn to master the art of seamanship. They are trained to be robust. I hope that cutter sailing will soon make its mark in the arena of aquatic sports.

It is our hope that the sea carnival today will help generate greater interest in aquatic sports in our country. I now declare the carnival open.

JULY 17, 1976.