

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENTMC/DEC/29/70(EDUN)

3

SPEECH BY MR. LIM KIM SAN, DY. CHAIRMAN, PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE FOURTH GENERAL MEETING OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION ON 28TH DEC., 1970

The past three years saw many significant changes in the Association, among which was the retirement of the Director, Mr. Sim Boon Peng. He was succeeded by Mr. Lee Hai Kok on 1st May this year. Last year the Association participated actively in the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of Singapore. Among the highlights were the first-ever South-East Asia Pugilistic Championships which was organised jointly with the Singapore National Pugilistic Federation, the first-ever Cake-making Exhibition organised by Women Sub-Committees, a new wing of the community centre set-up, and a grand charity variety concert staged by children attending kindergarten classes in community centres. This year is the 10th Anniversary of the Association. To commemorate it, a set of 3 commemorative stamps was issued by the Postal Department on 1st July, a souvenir tie was designed and distributed in August and a Souvenir Magazine has just been published.

The number of community centres has increased to 168 and is likely to increase further in the future. One significant fact which I wish to single out for particular mention is the growing involvement of the people in community activities. More and more management committees are actively participating in projects to renovate, extend, retrofit or rebuild community centres. Two good examples of these are the \$300,000 proposed new Kg. Glan Community Centre and the \$123,000 new Kg. Kapor Community Centre. The Building Committees of these centres are fully involved in the planning and financing of their new buildings with the People's Association taking a subsidiary role and in an advisory capacity only.

The trend towards self-help in improving community recreational facilities can be seen from the following figures: A total of \$58,846.25 was raised by various management committees for 26 projects in 1968 as against a P.A. Subsidy of \$3,795. In 1969 \$76,217.12 were raised for 21 projects as against a P.A. Subsidy of \$8,242.

The number of management committees has increased to 187 with a total membership of 2,018 members as against 1,864 in 1968 and 1,968 in 1969. Sub-committees and activity groups, such as women sub-committees and youth groups are formed under the management committees to cater for the needs of specific groups. Introduced in 1967, the women sub-committee now numbers 47 with a total membership of 1,160. This is a welcome change to the hitherto male-centred activities of the community centres.

A Cultural Group, comprising the People's Association Band, the People's Association Dance Troupe, the People's Association Chinese Orchestra, was formed in December, 1968 as a central body for the promotion of cultural activities in community centres and the Republic at large. Besides making numerous public appearances locally and conducting training courses for staff members, the Group also made its debut in the international scene. The Girl Pipara impressed many a PATA delegate in Bangkok when the troupe performed there in January 1969 at the invitation of the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board. The People's Association Dance Troupe was invited to give 2 shows in Colombo, Ceylon on October, 1970 at the invitation of the Malaysia-Singapore Airlines in conjunction with its inaugural flight to Ceylon. The Lion Dance Troupe of Kg. Giam C.C. performed in Bangkok in April 1970 also in conjunction with the Malaysia-Singapore Airlines' inaugural flight to Bangkok. Next February, the People's Association Dance Troupe has been invited by the University of Western Australia, organiser of the Festival of Perth, to participate in the Festival. Component units of the Cultural Groups have cut a number of records for local and international recording companies, in addition to their frequent recordings and appearances over Radio and Television Singapore. All these activities will help to arouse interest in culture and the arts among our people and I hope will attract them to participate in similar activities organized in the community centres.

As you are aware our Organising Secretaries must pass the training course at the National Youth Leadership Training Institute before they can be confirmed in the post. I am pleased to report that with the passing out of the 5th batch of Organising Secretaries from the National Youth Leadership Training Institute last August, all

Organising Secretaries have received their professional training. In order to improve the quality of our field workers we have now started another training course in the National Youth Leadership Training Institute for Assistant Organising Secretaries. The 1st batch of 30 Assistant Organising Secretaries have commenced their training on 1st October, 1970 and this is a residential course which will last for 4½ months.

Steps have also been taken to strengthen the Headquarters' staff by the recruitment of four University graduates and the promotion of two serving officers as Executive Officers. It is the policy of the Board of Management to fill the higher posts in the establishment whenever possible with serving officers and with this incentive I hope that more and more serving officers will try to improve themselves and grasp the opportunity available to them for further advancement.

Also for the staff as well as Corporation members, management committees and the general public, particularly the lower income group of workers, the Association is building holiday flats. These flats, consisting of eighteen 3-room units and twelve 2-room units, an office block, a multi-purpose hall, a store, canteen and caretaker's quarters and ample space for parking, will cost \$473,000, and will be part of the Pasir Ris holiday complex. They are expected to be ready for occupation about middle of next year. It is hoped that these holiday flats will provide ample opportunities for P.A. staff and the lower income group of workers to enjoy a holiday by the sea with their families at a cost within their means.

Dated: 28th December, 1970.

TIME ISSUED: 1600 HOURS.