

6/43841

PRESS RELEASE

Acc. No.	N'RC	
73	0033	232

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SPEECH BY DR. AUGUSTINE H.H. TAN, M.P. FOR WHAMPOA
AND POLITICAL SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER, AT
THE BALLOTING CEREMONY FOR THE NEW RAYMAN MARKET
AT WHAMPOA DRIVE ON TUESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 1973 AT
2.30 P.M.

I am pleased to attend this balloting exercise for hawkers' stalls in the new Rayman Market. Government has spent a lot of money building new markets and hawkers' centres. As you know, the rentals for hawkers are kept very low. This means that a hidden subsidy is being provided to hawkers. Some of the markets and hawkers' centres occupy valuable land which could be used for profitable industries. Yet Government has purposely provided the markets and hawkers centres in good locations.

There are two motives behind Government's hawkers' policy. One is to protect the livelihood of hawkers. The other is to help keep the cost of living down, especially for low income workers.

The number of hawkers grows all the time. This is a sure indication that hawking is a lucrative enterprise especially in good locations. There is always a long queue of unlicensed hawkers waiting for a legitimate site to do their business.

As a result there have been a number of attempts to bribe Housing Board and the Hawkers' Department officials, in order to obtain a stall at a good location. This is not good for Singapore. We must prevent corruption, however petty. Both officials and hawkers who are corrupt must be punished. I would urge your cooperation in providing information to the police and other relevant authorities on any such cases.

In addition, may I appeal to all of you to maintain high standards of hygiene so as to protect the health of everybody. The Singaporean is becoming more sophisticated in ways of living, so that the hawker who is dirty and spits freely will find his business declining. It is therefore, in your own interests to keep your stalls clean.

I wish you all prosperity in your business.

Time Issued : 9 a.m.

Date : Tuesday 20th February