

4/12/73

SPEECH BY DR ANG KOK PENG, MINISTER OF STATE FOR
COMMUNICATIONS AT THE OPENING OF THE UNCTAD SEMINAR
ON SYSTEMATIC METHODS OF IMPROVING BERTH THROUGHPUT
AT THE KING'S HOTEL ON MONDAY, 3 DECEMBER 1973 AT

9.00 A.M.

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It is an honour for Singapore to be chosen as the venue for this UNCTAD Seminar which is being participated by representatives from the major ports of Asia.

2 We are aware of the good work of UNCTAD on port research. UNCTAD's experience in the research on port statistics, cargo unitisation, berth throughput, port pricing and other aspects of port management is particularly valuable and deserves careful study by those responsible for the management of ports. And as mentioned by Mr E. Williamson, Chief of the Port Section of UNCTAD, technical assistance in the economic, operational and administrative aspects of port development is also available with financial blessing from the United Nations Development Programme. This seminar will no doubt enrich the experience of the participants and facilitate a greater exchange of ideas and experiences. I hope your deliberations will help you in the planning for further improvement of the ports in your countries.

3 Because of its favourable location in South-east Asia, Singapore has been associated with shipping since the very year of its founding one and half centuries ago. In fact, in the early years its economic activity was centred on shipping. We have therefore been learning how to carry out port operations for a long time and have constantly made efforts to provide modern and efficient port services and to expand and develop the capacity of our Port.

4 As an indication of the recent growth of port activities in Singapore, you may wish to know that since 1966 the cargo

handled has doubled, the shipping traffic has increased by 50 percent and the tonnage of vessels has increased by 72 percent, and in terms of shipping traffic Singapore is second to Yokohama among the ports in Asia with a cargo tonnage of 57.1 million tonnes and vessel tonnage of 177.5 million NRT for the year 1972.

5 With the rapid technological advances in maritime transport and in bulk and unitised cargo handling, our Port has been fully aware of the consequences of not keeping up with the time. It has accordingly taken various measures to modernise port facilities and to up-grade the skill and increase the productivity of port workers. When you visit the Port of Singapore Authority on Wednesday you will be able to discuss in detail the workings of the Port and its programme for development and also to exchange ideas and compare experiences in port matters, and to bring about closer co-operation in facing problems confronting port operations. In line with our desire to promote the development of management and operational skills, the Port of Singapore Authority will soon establish an Institute of Port Studies which will conduct training courses ranging from basic aspects of cargo handling to management techniques. We, of course, welcome students from other countries and hope to make some contribution to progress in port management in this region.

6 Before I conclude I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all participants and hope you will find the Seminar on Berth Throughput interesting and useful. It now gives me great pleasure to declare the Seminar open.

Date: 3 Dec 1973