

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY DR AHMAD MATTAR, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS,
AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF BRICKWORKS ZONE 'D' RESIDENTS'
COMMITTEE CENTRE AT BLOCK 23B QUEEN'S CLOSE #01-161
ON SUNDAY, 29 JULY 1984 AT 10.00 AM**

Every RC Zone which has been operational for one year or longer and is active is eligible for allocation of an RC Centre. This is to assist the RC members in the function of fostering a closer community spirit among the residents in the zone. The centre is made available by the government to the residents in the zone at a nominal rate. RC members should therefore ensure that the centre is fully used.

When organising activities for the residents it is essential that the needs of the residents be taken into account. A survey to find out the social and recreational requirements of the residents would be a logical first step in this direction. Every effort should be made to involve the residents in organising and running activities in the zone. The cost of activities should be borne by the participants themselves as far as possible. It is not the idea that RC members should provide activities and services to residents free. Rather, the RC members and the RC Secretariat would only act as catalysts in generating self-sustaining activities required by the residents.

With the ageing of our population, there will be more elderly persons in our midst. The majority of our senior citizens are living with, and supported by, their family members. This is a good phenomenon which the government has been actively encouraging. When the children and

grandchildren are working or studying during the day these elderly persons may face the problem of boredom if they do not have a circle of friends or relatives with whom they can interact. The RC centre is ideally placed to provide a focal point for socialisation of senior citizens residing in the zone. One advantage is that the centre is within walking distance for most residents in the zone and the senior citizens can come to the centre or return home on their own, without having to be accompanied by their family members who may not be available. No elaborate equipment is required. What they need is a quiet place for chit-chatting, reading and indoor games. Senior citizens, or their family members can be encouraged to organise hobby-type activities using the RC centre or the adjoining void deck. This could, I believe, gradually develop into activities not only for senior citizens alone, but for the children and other age groups.

On this note, it is now my pleasure to declare this centre open.

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