

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASE

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MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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The Ministry of National Development plays a key role in the physical development of Singapore. It aims at maximising land use through careful planning, laying the infra-structure for a thriving metropolis and building a pleasant environment for healthy and gracious living.

The major task facing the Ministry is the planning and rebuilding of the Central Area to bring back residential population of all income groups. Both public housing and private residential housing will be encouraged. Sites will be released by the Urban Redevelopment Authority to the private sector for development. Planning requirements and URA's sales conditions will ensure development of a high standard and quality.

The URA will continue to acquire and clear slums in the Central Area for development. In particular, it will accelerate urban development along the corridor from Tanglin Circus through Orchard Road, Bras Basah Road and Raffles International Centre into Marina Centre. One hundred hectares of reclaimed land at Marina Centre are now ready for the development of hotels, shopping complexes and entertainment/recreational facilities.

The Ministry will continue to improve the urban landscape to give the city a cool, green and pleasant environment. There will be more open spaces, pedestrian malls and landscaped walkways. In the Central Area, the Public Works Department is building a network of walkways and pedestrian malls to link the various commercial centres and offices. Twelve thousand of a proposed 34,000 metres of walkways

have been laid. There will also be more overhead bridges, underpasses and bus shelters for pedestrians. All these will be graced with trees and flowering shrubs by the Parks and Recreation Department. In addition, the Department will develop six more major parks covering 270 hectares in all. Another step to spruce up the city is to acquire and demolish dilapidated structures along the major highways. The acquisition and clearance for economic use of land on which squatters are living and cemeteries will continue.

Housing and Public Works

Having housed 60 per cent of the population, the Housing and Development Board will now concentrate on improving the design and quality of flats to be built: proposals include larger floor areas, higher ceilings, more lifts and better finish. The HDB will introduce more imaginative layouts for new estates and greater variety in building designs. In the old estates, the HDB will build recreational and social facilities like swimming pools, and install more and better lifts. The older blocks of flats will be refurbished into larger flat units or demolished.

By 1980, about 70 per cent of the population will live in HDB flats. A pilot scheme of Residents' Committees has been started in five areas to generate better neighbourhood ties and community spirit. When the form of the organisation has been settled successfully, Residents' Committees will be formed in other housing estates.

The PWD is presently engaged in several major road construction projects, such as the East Coast Parkway and the Pan Island Expressway. Projects scheduled for 1979 include the flyover at Newton Circus, the extension of the Bukit Timah One-Way System to link up with the East Coast Parkway, the Cross Street/Pickering Street One-Way System, the West Coast Arterial Road, and the Commonwealth Avenue Extension to Jurong.

Other major projects undertaken by the Ministry are the Changi Airport Development, the construction of the University of Singapore Campus at Kent Ridge and the development of Kent Ridge Hospital.

Primary Production

Pork, eggs and poultry production will have to increase through better farm management in order to stay economic in land-scarce Singapore. New farming methods such as hydroponics are under experiment.

A centralised wholesale market for fruits and vegetables will be built at Pasir Panjang. A second fishing port and wholesale market is planned for Punggol to replace the out-dated facilities at Kangkar.

Resettlement

Delays in resettlement are a major constraint in the implementation of public projects. In the years ahead, the tempo of resettlement will quicken. URA and HDB will therefore build adequate resettlement centres, some of which will be for special trades. Resettlement facilities will also be provided for industries which cause pollution.

Reclamation

About 300 hectares have been reclaimed next to the Central Business District. Reclamation work on another 360 hectares has begun. When completed, there will be a total of 660 hectares of land available for building on.

About 44 hectares of land will be reclaimed off Pasir Ris Beach for development into a major park to serve the recreational needs in the north-eastern sector of Singapore.

To protect Singapore's water resources, pig farming will continue to be phased out from all Water Catchment Areas. The farmers will be resettled on land reclaimed from swamps in Sungei Buloh, Lim Chu Kang. Reclamation of the foreshore areas at Pulau Tekong for farming purposes is also being considered.

LIM KIM SAN

MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT