

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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SPEECH BY MR CHOR YEOK ENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,
(ENVIRONMENT), AT THE OPENING OF THE ROAD SAFETY EXHIBITION
AT BUKIT TIMAH PLAZA ON SATURDAY, 2 OCTOBER 1982 AT 7.30 PM

Citizens of Singapore can justifiably be proud of having one of the best road systems in this part of Asia. For an Island with a land area of under 600 sq km, we have some 2,500 km of finely metalled roads, of which some 30 km are expressways specifically designed to stimulate fast traffic. Over the next few years, more roads will be built and these will include seven more expressways by the year 1992. There is, however, a limit to the number and length of roads that can be built considering the size of Singapore.

Over the last five years, that is, from 1977 to 1981, the number of motorcars has increased by some 26 per cent, motorcycles and scooters by some 42 per cent, goods and heavy vehicles by an enormous 77.2 per cent. Over the same period, the number of fatal and serious accidents that occurred on our roads and worried us were :-

	<u>Fatal</u>	<u>Serious</u>
Pedestrians	531	2,891
Pedal Cyclists	125	980
Motorcyclists/Scooterists	392	3,616
Motorcar drivers and Passengers	116	1,272
Motor Pick-Up Drivers and Passengers	71	528
Heavy Goods Vehicles/Bus Drivers and Passengers	53	809

Therefore I earnestly hope that all road users, be they pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists/scooterists or drivers of four-wheeled vehicles, will learn to share our roads in a spirit of co-operation and give and take for unless all of us do so, we

cannot safeguard /2.

cannot safeguard our limited manpower resources but let them end up dead or maimed affecting their whole life.

While it can be noted that the drivers of four-wheeled vehicles and their passengers account for a relatively smaller number of fatalities and serious injuries, this is not to be taken lightly for virtually all the pedestrians, pedal cyclists and a fair proportion of motorcyclists were killed or maimed by four-wheeled vehicles in accidents. The drivers of four-wheeled vehicles, especially the buses and heavy goods vehicles, therefore have a moral responsibility to give way to the pedestrian, the pedal cyclist and the motorcyclist at every opportunity for these people are very vulnerable when compared to motorists, bus and lorry drivers seated securely in their drivers' seats. At the same time, drivers of smaller four-wheeled vehicles such as motorcars and pick-ups should be patient and give way. They should not insist on their right of way, especially when confronted by heavy vehicles or buses. All should also learn to voluntarily and courteously give way to bigger vehicles, for example, buses emerging from bus bays. In Japan, for instance, it is an offence for a motorist not to give way to a bus emerging from a bus bay. The rationale for this is that a bus carries many more passengers than a motorcar does. Thus, the majority has preference of way.

I would like to conclude my address with a word of advice which is the theme of this year's Road Safety Campaign. Please exercise 'Patience' whenever you are on the road for in the effort to save a few minutes or even a few seconds, you risk losing your life or be crippled.

It is now my pleasure to declare the Road Safety Exhibition open.

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