

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASE

PUBLICITY DIVISION · MINISTRY OF CULTURE · CITY HALL SINGAPORE 6

National Archives and
Library Centre, Singapore.

Acc. No.	NARC	
78	0068	80

MG/JUL/47/78 (Labour)

5 AUG 1978

SPEECH BY MR FONG SIP CHEE, MP FOR CHAI CHEE AND SENIOR
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR, AT THE
OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE KAKI BUKIT
COMMUNITY CENTRE, THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF
THE WOODWORKING CLASS AND DISPLAY OF WORKS BY THE WOMEN
SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE KAKI BUKIT COMMUNITY CENTRE ON SATURDAY,
29 JULY 1978 AT 7.45 PM

On behalf of the Management Committee and residents of this area, may I extend to Dr Ahmad Mattar, Ag Minister for Social Affairs, our warmest welcome.

The environment of this neighbourhood is not strange to Dr Mattar and I believe he knows the area quite well. The Community Centre first opened its doors in August 1964 and, since its inauguration, it has not experienced much changes, although in the last 14 years the Singapore society has definitely undergone much transformation.

When I was asked to take charge of this Constituency, I realised the enormous task of first gearing the various social and community functionary groups towards meeting the new requirements and aspirations of the people. I have to plug in to a completely different thinking - rather, a different appreciation on the situation based on quite different criteria. Fortunately, I have the good fortune of the constant advice and guidance from Dr Ahmad Mattar, Tuan Haji Ya'acob and Comrade Mansor Sukaimi whom I have known for many years since his younger days.

The second task has been an equally onerous one - that of indentifying the functions of the community centre and to channel its activities to be more relevant to a different set of social condition and environment.

The Management Committee and myself have spent much time in our brain storming exercises. New activities were introduced to cater for the need of the youth and to do that the Centre embarked on an

extension project which has now been completed. The Woodworking Course is doing well providing opportunities of acquiring basic vocational knowledge for the youngsters in the neighbourhood. The WANITA has finally got a decent kitchen.

These are only two of the projects and not much to talk about but its significance is tremendous. This is because of our basic philosophy that the Community Centre, the Citizens' Consultative Committee and all its ancillary organisations must find relevance to society. Without this understanding, the existence of these functionary groups serves no tangible purpose.

Again, it is with this in mind that I have re-examined the functions of the various groups. I have decided that the award of scholarships next year will be confined only to applicants pursuing technical courses with the ITB as well as awards for the English language. I need not go into academic discussions on these two lines of action as I believe that most people understand the situation. Here again, the scholarship fund has found its relevance and usefulness to the need of the community at this point of time.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate the Management Committee and the People's Association staff for their diligence in the last one year. Their efforts have geared us to a new level and it is our duty not only to maintain this achievement but also to look further beyond the horizon. I have now the great pleasure to invite Dr Ahmad Mattar to address you.
