

14 NOV 1994

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information & The Arts, 36th Storey, PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 0511. Tel: 3757794/5

Release No.: 43/OCT14-2/94/10/29

94 - LHK - 13

**SPEECH BY MR LIM HNG KIANG,
ACTING MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
AT THE OPENING OF THE WHAMPOA FLYOVER
ON SATURDAY, 29 OCTOBER 1994 AT 11.30 AM**

I am happy to be here this morning to officially open the new Whampoa Flyover.

The Pan-Island Expressway (PIE) is Singapore's first and longest expressway. To cater for further increases in travel demand, the Public Works Department (PWD) had in 1991 embarked on a \$185 million comprehensive programme to upgrade and improve the middle stretch of PIE between Jalan Eunos and BKE. The upgrading works include the widening of the main carriageway, the expansion of the Woodsville, Whampoa and Whitley Flyovers, the building of the new Kim Keat Flyover, and the improvement to the Toa Payoh South Flyover.

The interchange of the Pan Island Expressway and the Central Expressway (CTE) is a major intersection of the two expressways. It is also, at present, the most complex in our expressway network in that it is the only one which serves as a four-way junction for intersecting expressways. Elsewhere in Singapore, our expressways have been planned to meet at three-way junctions.

PWD has staged the construction of the interchange to meet traffic needs. When the CTE was built in 1983, the first stage of the interchange, allowing for three turning movements, was constructed. Provisions were made in the design for its expansion to take on more turning movements. Five additional turning movements are catered by the complete interchange layout, two of which have been opened as part of the construction works. Later today, three more turning movements will be available,

enabling motorists a choice of many more routes of travel along our growing expressway network.

The upgrading of the Pan Island Expressway forms part of PWD's programme to expand the capacity of our road network to meet growing demand by our economic development and rising vehicle ownership. In the last five years, PWD spent \$1.13 billion on road projects. Last year alone, the PWD spent \$275 million.

PWD is currently undertaking 35 road projects worth some \$560 million. Examples are the expansion of the Adam Road/Farrer and Holland Road/Farrer Road/Queensway interchanges, the construction of the Kranji Expressway, the extension of the Seletar Expressway and the extension of Nicoll Highway and the building of the bridge at Marina Bay.

Over the next five years, the PWD expects to spend over \$1 billion on road projects. For example, the PWD recently announced the upgrading of Jalan Ahmad Ibrahim to expressway standard. Work on the bridge crossing which forms part of the Singapore-Malaysia Second Link is expected to start in early 1995.

The PWD had also completed the second phase feasibility study of the proposed underground road network around the city. This network of road tunnels will increase the future city's road capacity significantly with minimum land-take.

In land-scarce Singapore, however, there is a limit to the extent we can expand our road network. Take this project for example. To accommodate the fourth lane and sliproads at Toa Payoh, we had to deck over part of the canal. It will be very difficult to widen the PIE any further. The increase in the capacity of the PIE and the interchange was supposed to give us a respite for a few years. But, between the time PWD opened the interchange for use and today's opening ceremony, the congestion has returned. Many tell me that the CTE is now more congested

than before. And this is happening with a quota system in place to restrain the increase in the number of cars. Can you imagine the situation if there were no restraints measures?

While FWD will judiciously expand our road capacity to keep in line with the economic and social development of our nation, demand measures are necessary to prevent the growth of vehicle populations beyond the rate of expanding and the ultimate limit of our road capacity. We have successfully used fiscal measures to curb the growth of vehicle ownership and use. At the same time, our public transport systems have also been improved steadily. As a whole, these measures complement one another and have proven to work. They will have to be continued to be applied to maintain mobility on our roads.

We have used road pricing mechanisms to regulate traffic flow, through our ALS system in the city area. The Government is now looking towards the introduction of the Electronic Road Pricing system which, while initially intended to automate the operation of the ALS in the city, enables us to extend the concept of road pricing beyond the Central Business District (CBD) area. It is an added measure that the Government can use to maintain mobility on our roads.

Road building in our urban environment will invariably affect road users and the surrounding community. The upgrading of the busiest section of the PIE is no exception. The PWD has tried to minimise disruption to the motorists and inconvenience to the nearby communities as much as possible. The successful implementation of the works has been facilitated by the understanding, cooperation and assistance of all grassroots organisations, services departments, and various other parties involved in this project. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of you.

I now have pleasure to declare the new Whampoa Flyover open.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@