

# Singapore Government

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SILAT AVENUE SUB-COMMUNITY CENTRE  
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SPEECH BY MR LEE KHOON CHOY, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SILAT AVENUE SUB-COMMUNITY CENTRE ON 15 JANUARY '82 AT 7.30 PM

In the Anson Constituency, there are two community centres: the Maxwell Community Centre (formerly known as the Anson Community Centre) and the Silat Avenue Community Centre. These centres serve two different catchment population areas. The Maxwell Community Centre was built in early 1966, and the Silat Avenue Community Centre, a temporary centre, was converted from the void deck of Block 141 in March 1980.

The residents in the Constituency have for sometime felt the need to have a bigger and better equipped centre with modern facilities. This is because the existing two centres do not have sufficient facilities to cater to the increasing needs of the people. The community leaders in Anson Constituency responded to this challenge. And in November 1979, they set up the Building Fund Committee to raise funds for a new community centre. Over the past two years, the Building Fund Committee has been working very hard. Because of their dedication and tireless efforts coupled with the enthusiastic support of the constituents, I am pleased to say that the construction of a new generation community centre has already begun.

The new centre will take two years to complete. Less enterprising MC leaders would prefer to wait for the new community centre to be built before doing anything for the residents. However, the MC members of Silat Avenue Community Centre are men of enterprise and initiative. Instead of waiting for the new centres to be built, they recently took the initiative of applying to the HDB for additional space so that the residents' growing needs in the Silat Avenue area could be met immediately. Their initiative reflects their concern for the welfare of the residents, and it has the full support of the PA. I am indeed honoured to be here this evening to officiate the opening of the Silat Avenue Sub-Community Centre.

It is commendable ..... /2.

It is commendable that community leaders in many constituencies have worked very hard and made sacrifices to build new community centres. This alone is not enough. For their dedication, hard work and sacrifice can only raise funds to build community centres; but they cannot make the centres a focal point for the people in the neighbourhood. The community centre can only become a rallying point if the people themselves are prepared to participate in its activities, and if the people are prepared to identify themselves with the centre. This Sub-Centre is open primarily for residents living in the Silat Avenue area, and this Sub-Centre would remain a shell if the people do not make use of its facilities. This is your Centre, and it is you and you alone that can transform it into a focal point around which the whole Silat Avenue community can revolve.

In Singapore, we are living in a fast changing situation, and it would be fatal if we fail to recognise the changing socio-economic scenario and to take appropriate measures to respond to it. In this connection, the partnership of the CCC, MCs and the RCs must be viewed as a significant development towards achieving greater community cohesion. It is another step forward towards providing better community service for the people. The strong bond among these grassroots organisations makes it possible for the pooling of resources, and this in turn makes it possible for a more efficient utilisation of limited talent, financial and manpower resources for the benefit of the whole community. Moreover, it also helps to develop the team spirit, a factor of crucial importance in fostering neighbourliness. The fire incident occurred last December underlines the importance of team spirit and neighbourliness. Mr Gurdev Singh Gill, Chairman of RC Zone A alerted the residents of Block 141 in Jalan Bukit Merah when he saw fire raging in a ground floor shop. Later the MC Chairman Mr Lim Kay Woon and Secretary Mr Wee Ah Su visited the victim in the hospital. They also helped him solve the problems of accommodation and setting up a temporary bread stall. These are examples of residents showing concern and care for fellow residents. I am confident that through greater involvement in community affairs more people in Anson as well as in other constituencies would develop a greater sense of community spirit, and this is a first step towards a caring society.

I now have the honour to declare this Silat Avenue Sub-Community Centre open.

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