

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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SPEECH BY MR LEE YIOK SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) AND MP FOR BUKIT PANJANG AT THE OPENING
OF THE CRIME PREVENTION EXHIBITION AT THE CONCOURSE OF
PEOPLE'S PARK COMPLEX ON FRIDAY, 5 JUNE '81 AT 7.30 PM

Our good economic progress over the last two decades has resulted in greater affluence and rising standard of living for Singaporeans. However, coupled with rapid urbanisation and lack of crime prevention consciousness, it has also resulted in increasing crime incidence in Singapore.

Although Singapore's crime situation is less serious than other comparable cities in the world, there has nevertheless been a steady increase in the crime rate. The crime rate in 1979 was 1,036 seizeable offences per 100,000 population, an increase of 24.7 per cent over 1978. This increased by a further 18 per cent in 1980, with 1,226 seizeable offences per 100,000 population. Preventable property offences such as robberies, housebreakings and thefts were the main contributors to the increase. Robberies increased by 23.7 per cent in 1979 and a further 17.5 per cent in 1980. Housebreakings increased by 41 per cent in 1979 and by a further 6.6 per cent in 1980 while theft offences also rose by 14.4 per cent and a further 16.7 per cent in 1979 and 1980 respectively.

Many of the offences, including housebreaking and theft of property which account for more than 60 per cent of the seizeable offences recorded in Singapore, could have been prevented if better security measures and greater care had been taken by the victims themselves. The Government has therefore decided to launch the National Crime Prevention Campaign 1981. This is to inform the public that crime prevention is a community responsibility and to create a greater crime prevention awareness in the community as a whole. Hence, the theme

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for this year's campaign is "You Can Help Prevent Crime".

This exhibition and others in this series display, amongst other things, how crimes are committed, and what steps can be taken to prevent it. It is hoped that everyone should visit these exhibitions and help spread the crime prevention message among family, friends and neighbours.

All Residents' Committees and Citizens' Consultative Committees will actively participate in this National Crime Prevention Campaign led by their respective Members of Parliament. One of their main activities would be to promote the 'Neighbourhood Watch'. This is an informal arrangement among immediate neighbours to help and look after each other's property and well-being. This can be achieved by being more caring and alert especially when there are strangers around or if the neighbours are not at home. Everyone is urged to give this scheme the full co-operation and support it deserves.

To supplement its traditional crime prevention role the Police have, since 1977, adopted a co-ordinated victim-oriented approach to crime prevention. They offer advice to individuals, households, commercial organisations and industries on crime prevention measures. This has been boosted by the establishment of its Crime Prevention and Community Relations Department earlier this year. The public is urged to make full use of this service to protect themselves against crime.

Finally, it is my pleasure now to declare this Crime Prevention Exhibition open.