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PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR PHUA BAH LEE, SR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(DEFENCE) AND MP FOR TAMPINES ON THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF
MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES OF TAMPINES, PASIR RIS
AND KG LOYANG COMMUNITY CENTRES ON FRI 29 JUN 84 AT TAMPINES
CC AT 8 PM**

We are gathered here once again to celebrate the re-appointment of members of the Tampines, Pasir Ris and Kg Loyang Community Centres Management Committees. The majority are veterans in community work who have untiringly and faithfully served the Tampines constituency for umpteem years. Their unselfish devotion and dedication to community service have gained them much admiration and respect. Some of the older leaders have lived in Tampines since their childhood days and have become the natural revered elders of the village. Throughout the years, they had been actively involved in welfare and social work of the community. They shared the joy and sorrow of their neighbours and kampong folks. They lived in close rapport with them and always showed concern and care for their well-being. This sense of neighbourliness, understanding, belonging and caring have given the kampong peace, harmony and security and even the 1963 racial riot could not shake its tranquillity. As community leaders they have a strong sense of dedication and conviction and have the interest and welfare of the kampong folks at heart. They do not only provide sound steady leadership but in financing either neighbourhood or constituency level projects and activities there were always no lack of enthusiasm and support. Most of the village problems and troubles were brought to their attention for help and advice.

These not only concerned requests and proposals to improve the facilities and amenities of the kampong for the benefit of the residents but also matters involving personal disputes and family squabbles. Any happening in the village, no matter how serious or trivial would not escape their notice. Knowing the people well and being highly respected and trusted, their intercession, guidance and advice were frequently sought after by those residents with family troubles, disputes between landlords and tenants and quarrels among neighbours. More often than not, many of such problems were quickly resolved and amicably settled without further resort to legal proceedings. This has invariably saved the disputants a lot of time and money. If not they might have instituted private law suits which would entail costly legal fees and, furthermore, would burden the heavily scheduled law courts with more work. Speedy amicable settlement between disputing parties without undergoing prolonged hearings at the court would greatly help to heal the hurt and animosity of the disputants more easily and faster. It will help to preserve the harmony and cordiality in the neighbourhood.

Our young leaders of to-day can learn much from these seasoned community leaders. They should try to emulate their undaunted spirit and exemplary leadership and build up trust, respect and confidence amongst those residents in their respective areas/neighbourhood. They should do their best to improve the quality of life for the residents and promote a healthy, friendly and closely-knit community in their own neighbourhood.

The people of Tampines are grateful and thankful to these old leaders for their unflinching and dedicated service to the community for the past numerous years and for their willingness to continue with their good work.
