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SPEECH BY PRESIDENT WEE KIM WEE
AT THE LAUNCH OF VOLUNTEERS MONTH '89 AND
THE FIFTH COMMUNITY CHEST AWARDS CEREMONY
AT THE ISTANA ON FRIDAY, 30 JUNE 1989 AT 11.00 AM

It gives me great pleasure this morning to celebrate with you two significant events, the launch of the first Volunteers Month and the fifth Community Chest Awards Ceremony.

Social and community volunteers have a special place in society. I am therefore happy to see the contributions of volunteers recognized, starting with Volunteers' Day in 1986, and extended to Volunteers' Week in 1988, and now a Volunteers' Month. It speaks well of our citizens who are increasingly conscious of the need to do social and community service. Such people, and you among them, are sacrificing your time and energy without financial rewards. You only have the intangible satisfaction of knowing that you have helped less-fortunate people, enabling a disabled person find new joy in life, or providing tuition to an academically good, but financially dependent student, or other poor souls in dire straits.

It also speaks well of the co-ordinators of the volunteers and the organisers of this event such as the Singapore Council of Social Service, the Ministry of Community Development, People's Association and the Singapore Joint Civil Defence Forces. In publicly acknowledging the vital role volunteers are playing in every facet of our society, you are helping to build partnerships that will increase the cooperation between the government and the corporate and voluntary organisations and strengthen the social fabric of our society.

It is appropriate for the Community Chest of Singapore to present Awards to its outstanding contributors in conjunction with Volunteers' Month. It shows that the sacrifices by volunteers are not taken for granted. I hope all organisations dependent on the help of volunteers will not lose sight of this important function. The 109 corporations and individuals receiving awards today, and another 113 who will be receiving their awards at a separate ceremony, deserve this outstanding and tangible recognition.

I am happy to note that the number of donors to the SHARE programme of the Community Chest has increased. Much of the credit for its success must go to the SHARE Executives Programme. SHARE Executives are senior management officers specially assigned by corporations to publicise the SHARE campaign within their companies and sign on new SHARE donors. Last year, 23 Executives from 19 companies participated in the SHARE Executives Programme. They helped to bring in 23,000 new donors. This year the Chest hopes to recruit more SHARE Executives. I wish it success and would urge as many companies and corporations to respond positively wherever they can. The demands on the Chest increase year by year. More money will be needed. More volunteers to help raise it.

I want to pay tribute to all volunteers, corporate and individual, for your contributions. I salute all of you for your leadership, commitment and dedication in helping to build a better and more compassionate Singapore.

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