"thisweek

06 APRIL 2014
60 CENTS
MCI (P) 183/12/2013

Licensed To Clean

New licensing scheme to help cleaners progress.

>>p06

Battling The Haze

Are unions ready to take on the haze should it get worse? Read on and find out.

>>p10

Flashback

Spotlight on the epochal 1969 Modernisation Seminar that transformed the Labour Movement to what it is today.

>>p12

New Employment Act – Now Showing At Your Workplace

Starring The Labour Movement, who has been hard at work championing workers' causes and interests.

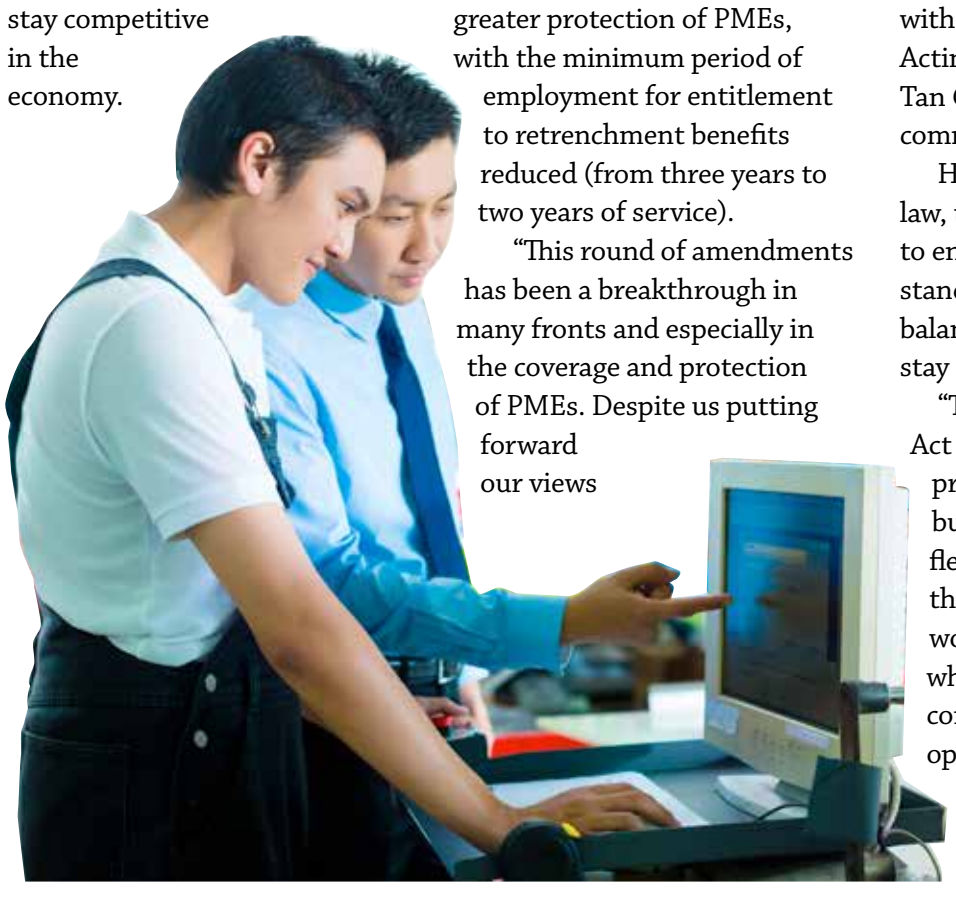
And The Changes Roll In...

Here's the cast of winners: the Labour Movement, union leaders and workers who cheer the new breakthrough changes in the Employment Act.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman** and **Naseema Banu Maideen**

The recent deck of changes to the Employment Act (EA) that kicked in on 1 April 2014 brought with it news of better protection for more workers, especially the PMEs (Professionals, Managers and Executives).

Enacted in 1968, the EA is Singapore's main labour law that seeks to ensure reasonable employment standards while balancing businesses' need to stay competitive in the economy.



The platter of changes has brought with it much cheer for the Labour Movement.

Said NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Patrick Tay and NTUC PME Unit Director: "I am very happy to see that many of the key changes which the Labour Movement has advocated and lobbied for, have been accepted and implemented, in this round of amendments to better protect workers."

He also said that there is now greater protection of PMEs, with the minimum period of employment for entitlement to retrenchment benefits reduced (from three years to two years of service).

"This round of amendments has been a breakthrough in many fronts and especially in the coverage and protection of PMEs. Despite us putting forward our views vehemently and pushing for workers' interests assertively, I appreciate the tripartite partners for working very closely and spending time understanding our various positions and arriving at these amendments, which are in many ways pro-worker," he added.

WIN-WIN FOR WORKERS, EMPLOYERS

Protecting workers was also a point emphasised in interviews with *NTUC This Week* by both Acting Manpower Minister Tan Chuan-Jin and business community leaders.

He said: "As our main labour law, the Employment Act seeks to ensure reasonable labour standards for our workers, while balancing employers' needs to stay competitive.

"The recent Employment Act amendments increase protection for more workers, but give employers ample flexibility to manage these changes. Our workers ultimately benefit when businesses stay competitive, as more jobs and opportunities are created.

"Overall, the changes will bolster Singapore's efforts to institute good employment norms and develop progressive workplaces for all workers in Singapore.

"The move also complements our efforts to build a better Singapore for all."

EMPLOYERS: NEW ACT IS PROGRESSIVE

One group of employers who has been busy engaging their members on the changes to the Employment Act is the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME), which currently has 6,000 SMEs in its membership.

ASME's President Kurt Wee said the SME business community has by and large in the past two years improved their hiring practices in their bid to better recruit, retain and maintain a more sustainable workforce.

Competition for labour has also brought about higher wages

for the working population, with the blue collar workforce experiencing higher and more progressive wages in the last two years.

Mr Wee said against this backdrop, SMEs view the changes to the Act as a progressive measure to ensure relevant segment of the workforce in the appropriate wage-band continue to enjoy enhanced levels of protection.

Providing sick leave and protection for unfair dismissal are already mainstream practices of SMEs.

Mr Wee added: "As such, we are of the opinion that the changes will be accepted with a good level of ease. We are appreciative of the time span given on measures such as mandatory payslips, so that the SME community have more time to plan and subsequently implement."

The revised Employment Act will also require written itemised payslips to be provided and detailed employment records maintained, including salary of all employees.

The Manpower Ministry said this not only protects employees, but also helps employers in the event of a salary dispute.

ASME's Kurt Wee says many SMEs currently already issue payslips. But some may not have

their payslips in the required format.

"There may be some SMEs that are more family-centric or those that have GIRO system in place, who may not have formalised the payslips process in place, nonetheless, our ground findings affirmed that the absence of payslips did not mean absence of proper payroll accounting processes. All in all, we are glad the time will be given for all SMEs to undertake and implement the new mandatory payslips requirements," he added.

On public education for SMEs on the new Employment Act changes, ASME says it is looking to incorporate new EA briefs in its training programmes for SMEs and PMEs . It is also reaching out to the business community through events and the SME Centres.

What The Unions Say

PMEs now make up one-third of the Singaporean workforce numbers, and this proportion is very likely to steadily increase. Unions which were largely representing rank-and-file workers in the past and are now witnessing a steady surge in PME members welcomed the changes. These changes extend the coverage to PMEs, and give them better protection in areas like unfair dismissal, paid public holidays, paid sick leave and hospitalisation leave.

"Finally, with these changes, we are now able to represent PMEs earning up to $4,500 in areas such as unfair dismissal redress. In the recent years, many PMEs have come up to ask us, 'What's in it for me as a union member?' besides the social benefits. Now, we will have a stronger voice for them."

Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union (SMEEU) General Secretary Tommy Goh

"PMEs earning a basic monthly salary of up to $4,500 can be covered with sick leave benefits and protection against unfair dismissal, these have been concerns that have been voiced strongly by PMEs. I believe that while the tripartite group is in the process of reviewing the IR (Industrial Relations) Act, PMEs can expect some of their expectation to be met when the changes are announced."

The Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union (SMMWU) Deputy Secretary-General Andy Lim

"Thousands of public employees will benefit from the threshold increase for basic monthly salary of $2,000 to $2,500 for purpose of overtime work, work on rest days and public holidays. Their overtime pay will consequently go up."

Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) General Secretary Ma Wei Cheng

Next Page: Employment Act Changes Guide
The new changes aim to better protect workers and raise employment standards, as well as provide flexibility to employers to manage these changes.

EMPLOYMENT ACT CHANGES

From 1 April 2014

BETTER PROTECTION FOR MORE WORKERS

If you are a **manager and executive** earning up to $4,500[1], you will have:

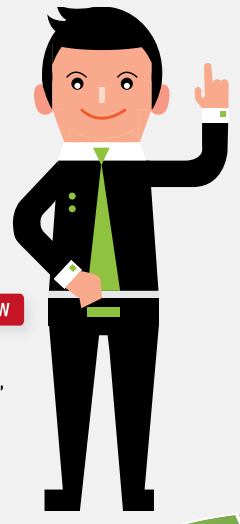
a) Salary protection
b) General protection such as redress against unfair dismissal, paid public holidays, paid sick leave and hospitalisation leave etc NEW

If you are a **non-workman (e.g. clerks and sales staff)** earning between $2,000 to $2,500, you will have:

a) Salary protection
b) General protection such as redress against unfair dismissal, paid public holidays, paid sick leave and hospitalisation leave etc
c) Working hours-related protection such as hours of work, overtime (OT), work on rest day pay and annual leave etc NEW

If you are a **non-workman earning up to $2,000** or **workman** (manual workers) **earning up to $4,500:**

You will continue to have all the protection listed in a), b) and c)



IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AND BENEFITS NEW

≤25%

Employers **are not allowed to deduct more than 25%** of an employee's salary for accommodation, amenities and services.

3 → 2 YEARS

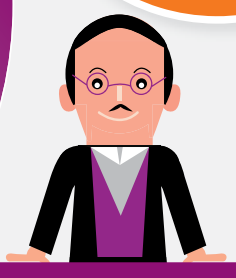
From 1 April 2015, the minimum period of employment before an employee can request for retrenchment benefits will be reduced from **3 years to 2 years**.

MOM plans to mandate the issuance of itemised payslips within the next two years. A set of **Tripartite Guidelines** has been issued to guide employers in issuing itemised payslips.

FROM 1 APRIL 2014, ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED TO EMPLOYERS

- Guidance for Employment Act changes
- Payslip booklets, downloadable templates, guidebooks and information on funding support for customised solutions will be made available on MOM's website

ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE



FLEXIBILITY FOR EMPLOYERS

STIFFER PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO PAY SALARIES

CURRENT	NEW
FIRST OFFENCE Maximum fine of $5,000 and/or a maximum of 6 months' jail	**FIRST OFFENCE** Fine of between $3,000 and $15,000 and/or a maximum of 6 months' jail
SUBSEQUENT OFFENCE Maximum fine of $10,000 and/or a maximum of 12 months' jail	**SUBSEQUENT OFFENCE** Fine of between $6,000 and $30,000 and/or a maximum of 12 months' jail

The maximum composition fine for an offence under the Employment Act will be increased from $1,000 to $5,000.

[1]All salary figures in this advertorial refer to basic monthly salary, which is the remuneration payable monthly to the employee that does not vary from month to month, in respect of work done under his contract of service.

OT RATE PAYABLE FOR NON-WORKMEN CAPPED AT BASIC MONTHLY SALARY LEVEL OF $2,250

CURRENT NEW

SALARY/ MONTH	FORMULA TO CALCULATE HOURLY BASIC RATE	CALCULATION OF HOURLY BASIC WAGE	OVERTIME HOURLY WAGE	OVERTIME HOURLY WAGE
$1,600	12 x Basic monthly rate of pay ÷ 52 x 44	12 x $1,600 / 52 x 44 = $ 8.40	$8.40 x 1.5 = $12.60	$8.40 x 1.5 = $12.60 (no change)
$2,250	12 x Basic monthly rate of pay ÷ 52 x 44	12 x $2,250 / 52 x 44 = $ 11.80	Not covered on OT pay	$11.80 x 1.5 = $17.70
$2,400	12 x Basic monthly rate of pay ÷ 52 x 44	12 x $2,250 / 52 x 44 = $ 11.80	Not covered on OT pay	$11.80 x 1.5 = $17.70

NEW **For managers and executives**

- Managers and executives earning up to $4,500 **must have served with the same employer for at least 12 months** to be eligible to seek redress against unfair dismissal where notice is given

≥ 12

- Employers will have the **additional option to grant time-off-in-lieu** for these managers and executives who work on public holidays

MINISTRY OF MANPOWER
www.mom.gov.sg
MOM Contact Centre : 6438 5122

Work-Life Achiever Award

Reprinted with permission from the Ministry of Manpower

Key leaders of SMMWU in conversation.

SMMWU: Ready To Ride The PME Wave

The biggest union in the Labour Movement eyes the PMEs as it packs in a refreshed leadership to lead in the next four years.

By **Naseema Banu Maideen**

The Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union (SMMWU) is set to thrive on fresh ideas. New inspiration from its rejuvenated leadership will keep up the momentum on the progressive way forward – to stay relevant to the workforce. And that will see the union rise up to tackle the needs of PMEs (Professionals, Managers and Executives).

Putting in order the new Executive Council for the next four years on 21 March 2014 at its Quadrennial Delegates' Conference, SMMWU is clear on the journey ahead.

SMMWU Secretary-General David Yeo Cher Lian said: "Our focus will be on PMEs, but that does not mean we are losing sight of our rank-and-file workforce."

PMEs make up about over 30 per cent of the union's membership base. And this number is inevitably set to escalate, given the improving academic affluence of the younger population entering the workforce.

A NEW CHAPTER

The union has, in fact, started to aggressively cater to the needs of this group of members through the launch of its Pro U Chapter in 2012. Mr Yeo said this avenue to reach out to PMEs has shed some light on what will work and what will not work to attract younger people.

"We came up with some usual programmes which we thought would interest them. With every try, we learn new things. When the turnout for these events was not as anticipated, we looked into other areas. We therefore took a shot at organising activities like scuba-diving which drew more crowds. So, we have to keep breaking new ground," he elaborated.

SMMWU President Eugene Teo Yew Chee, a first-term leader, echoed similar sentiments on keeping existing members engaged with the union.

Guest-of-Honour Member of Parliament for Sembawang GRC Ong Teng Koon, who is also SMMWU's Advisor, had the same advice for the union's leadership.He noted in his speech that meeting the aspirations of a younger Singaporean workforce and staying relevant to meet their changing needs is important.

GEARING UP TO REPRESENT PMES

The number of PMEs in the workforce is growing, and it is estimated that by 2030, about two thirds will be PMEs. When these PMEs are allowed to be fully represented, the union will have to work towards including them into its scope of representation.

Said SMMWU Executive Secretary and NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Patrick Tay: "We will have a lot to do to prepare ourselves for this challenge ahead."

The union's new Executive Council is in itself a reflection of the evolving workforce profile as almost half of the leaders are PMEs. Another noteworthy fact – the good mix of veteran and younger leaders as well as women leaders in the fold. This is a mark of the union's commitment towards gender parity and leadership rejuvenation as pointed out by SMMWU Secretary-General Emeritus John De Payva.

QUICK LOOK

A Note From The Veteran

At the SMMWU's Quadrennial Delegates' Conference on 21 March, Secretary-General Emeritus John De Payva had this message for the new Executive Council: Never take things for granted. Mr De Payva, who is also NTUC President Emeritus, put in a note to branch leaders who may move up to take on managerial positions in the next four years: Support the upgrading and re-skilling of workers under your care, with a heart to level them up regardless of their educational standards.

Licensed To Clean

Cleaners will now have better progression opportunities in their sectors, with a new licensing scheme coming into effect.

By **Naseema Banu Maideen**

The Labour Movement rejoiced in another breakthrough announcement that shed light on the new licensing for cleaning businesses. The Environmental Public Health (EPH) Amendment Bill came into force on 1 April 2014.

In essence, the licensing regime requires licensees to have written employment contracts, provide training and progressive wage plans that incorporate elements of NTUC's Progressive Wage Model (PWM).

The PWM, championed by the Labour Movement, first started targeting to uplift the skills, productivity, career and wages of the workers in the cleaning sector. These efforts have seen results.

The licensing ensures that cleaners receive wages that commensurate with their skills, training and productivity. An estimated 55,000 resident cleaners will benefit from the scheme. In addition, service buyers and consumers can look forward to more reliable and better quality cleaning services.

BETTER WORKERS

This now means that cleaning businesses will have to submit their applications for cleaning business licences. Even if the services form only part of their overall business, all general cleaning businesses in Singapore will have to be licenced before 1 September 2014.

Service buyers, on their part, should check that their cleaning service providers are licenced. The list of licenced cleaning businesses is shown on the National Environment Agency website, and it will be updated periodically.

Said NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and NTUC U Care Centre Director Zainal Sapari: "The Labour Movement welcomes this new initiative to help workers in the cleaning industry become better workers with better wages. The licensing regime is a milestone change for the cleaning industry because it would inject greater professionalism in terms of better skills, higher productivity and better career prospects for the cleaners.

"However, it is important that workers, service providers and service buyers work together to achieve a win-win-win outcome for all parties. Workers must upgrade their skills for better productivity, service providers must provide better working terms and conditions and service buyers must be willing to pay more for more reliable and better service."

PROGRESSIVE WAGES

A joint statement from the Ministry of Manpower, Singapore Workforce Development Agency and the National Environment Agency said that the Commissioner for Labour has considered and fully adopted the Tripartite Cleaning Cluster's recommendations for resident cleaners' starting basic wages.

Cleaning businesses seeking to be licenced from 1 April 2014 will need to submit a progressive wage plan for resident cleaners, specifying basic wages no less than the wage levels for each class of cleaners under the PWM. Licenced cleaning businesses must also provide their cleaners with pay slips and employment contracts that state wages in accordance with their submitted progressive wage plan.

> **"ISS fully supports the licensing scheme as it will help to level the playing field. Licensed service providers will now have to operate on transparent employment terms with the licensing conditions. This will also uplift the livelihood of the cleaners with better and progressive salaries, and also encourage the buyers to buy responsibly as cheap cleaning is not only 'no good' but risky too with the penalties for engaging unlicensed cleaning companies."**
>
> *ISS Facility Services Private Limited, Country Managing Director, Woon Chiap Chan*

Cleaning businesses can contact the **National Environment Agency** at **1800- 2255-632** or visit **www.nea.gov.sg** for more details on licensing.

We found a way to assemble our parts twice as fast!

That's productivity!

Nelson Lim
Chief Executive/Founder
TranZplus Engineering (S) Pte Ltd

WAY TO GO, SINGAPORE!
www.waytogo.sg
HERE'S TO PRODUCTIVITY.

A SIMPLE IDEA CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

INITIATE

TranZplus wants to become the go-to mechanical power transmission specialist in the industry. Faced with growing customer demand, space and manpower constraints, we need simple and quick ways to increase efficiency.

INNOVATE

We colour-coded and improved the labelling of the trays in the assembly area. We can now easily identify parts and monitor stock levels for quicker replenishment.

IMPACT

The time required to locate the parts is now reduced by two-thirds, and assembly time is twice as fast. We now save two and a half hours each day!

Find out how to raise the productivity of your company too! Visit **www.waytogo.sg**

Exciting Young Minds

NTUC's SEED Institute develops a series of picture storybooks to encourage preschoolers to be actively bilingual.

By **Florina Oo**

Learning the English and Chinese languages will no longer be difficult for young children as a new series of bilingual picture storybooks have been introduced.

They are produced by NTUC's SEED Institute and the Singapore Centre for Chinese Language (SCCL), with sponsorship from the Lee Kuan Yew Fund for Bilingualism.

The four books in the illustrated series revolve around a central co-operative theme which encourages character building in young children and allows them to learn English and Chinese in a fun and interactive way.

Besides reading, other activities such as dramatisation, rhymes and games can also be designed around the themes in the books. This will provide more opportunities for children to use the words and sentences learnt from the storybooks in both the English and Chinese languages.

Ms Stella Pereira, Principal at The Little Skool-House On-The-Green, a preschool under NTUC First Campus Co-operative Limited, welcomed the bilingual books and said they make an effective tool to teach the languages to the children.

"The stories are carried in Chinese and English versions which give parents the opportunity to have the same conversation with a child in both languages. This becomes an additional support for the child to strengthen their linguistic ability," she said.

Ms Pereira added that the school has started utilising the storybooks since early March 2014 and said that they complemented the school's literacy-based curriculum.

QUICK LOOK

The bilingual picture storybooks will be distributed to all 1,600 preschools in Singapore by the end of April this year. Each preschool will receive two sets of the books. Parents can also loan the books to read with their children at home.

NTUC THIS WEEK

MANAGING EDITOR
SHONA TAN-JAMES shonatan@ntuc.org.sg

EDITOR-AT-LARGE
MARCUS LIN marcus_lin@ntuc.org.sg

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS
LIM LI YIN liyin@ntuc.org.sg
RAMESH SUBBARAMAN rameshr@ntuc.org.sg

EDITORS
NICOLETTE YEO nicolette_yeo@ntuc.org.sg
GURMEET SINGH gurmeet_singh@ntuc.org.sg

SENIOR WRITER
NASEEMA BANU MAIDEEN naseema@ntuc.org.sg

WRITERS
JOSHUA JOSEPH MARIMUTHU joshua_joseph@ntuc.org.sg
NICHOLAS LEE nicholas_lee@ntuc.org.sg
FLORINA OO florina_oo@ntuc.org.sg

ART DIRECTOR
DANIEL GOH daniel_goh@ntuc.org.sg

SENIOR DESIGNER
MOHAMED NASUHAR SOEYOETI nasuhar@ntuc.org.sg

DESIGNER
RYANNE NG ryanne_ng@ntuc.org.sg

SUBSCRIPTION
JENNY LIAU jennyliau@majoritymedia.com.sg

ADVERTISING BOOKINGS/QUERIES
Phone 6622 7009
Email sales@majoritymedia.com.sg

PUBLISHER
MAJORITY MEDIA PTE LTD
Address 73 Bras Basah Road, NTUC Trade Union House #06-01 Singapore 189556
Phone +65 6622 7098 Fax +65 6327 5640
Email LMNewsroom@ntuc.org.sg

PRINTER
TIMES PRINTERS PTE LTD

© Copyright 2014 The publisher owns the copyright to all photographs and articles in this publication. No photograph or article may be reproduced in part or in full without the consent of the publisher.

IPHONE & IPAD
The Labour Movement, Now Closer To U On The Go!
Scan here for mobile app My NTUC featuring exclusive content: get the latest news, special offers, merchants listing and a lot more!
ANDROID

Govt-Union Ties A Win-Win

Singapore benefits from the close ties the government has with NTUC, says PM Lee.

PM Lee (left) with tripartite partners at May Day Rally 2013.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Lessons from Singapore's experience in riding out of the global financial crisis of 2008 never fails to get raised by international think tank experts when they get a chance to meet Singapore's leaders at dialogues and public forums.

The subject was once again raised when Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong had a dialogue in London at the Chatham House during his recent trip to the United Kingdom.

One point which Mr Lee emphasised was the benefits that Singapore derives from the close ties the government has with the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC).

Asked how Singapore had managed the 2008/2009 financial crisis, Mr Lee explained: "We had the resources and the ability to react fast enough, for us to be able to buffer ourselves from the sudden panic, from people suddenly pulling back, retrenching, causing unemployment and dislocation and causing further pain and cumulative anxiety and a spiral downwards.

"We managed to have some of the burden taken on by the State. We paid for part of the social security contributions of our workers and lessened the burden on employers and as it turned out we sailed through with hardly any increase in our unemployment. And the storm passed faster than we expected and we took off," he said.

Asked if there were any other cataclysm happening soon, Mr Lee added "It depends what exactly happens; we keep our powder dry, we have reserves, we have people who are hardworking, we have unionists who work with us to solve problems in a way which is win-win and benefits workers…we are not at odds within ourselves, so we can unite to fight the problems which face us from the rest of the world."

Co-operative Opens Hotel In KL

Following its flagship hotel in Singapore, Seacare now has a brand new address in Kuala Lumpur city featuring 102 rooms.

Seacare Co-operative Limited officially opened the Citin Seacare Hotel on 29 March 2014, about a year after it acquired Citin Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia through a joint venture partnership with WYCL Holding Sdn Bhd.

The 102-room Citin Seacare Hotel is the first Singapore co-operative-owned hotel property in Malaysia, under the Seacare flag; last year, Seacare launched its flagship The Seacare Hotel on 52 Chin Swee Road.

According to Mr Lim Chye Teen, CEO of Seacare Properties Pte Ltd, the acquisition of Citin Hotel was part of Seacare's business strategy to expand actively into hotel investment and management as well as property development in the region.

Representatives and guests of Seacare, Seacare Properties and WYCL Holding Sdn Bhd at the opening of the Citin Seacare Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

MEMBER BENEFITS

In his opening speech, Mr Lim said that Seacare, as part of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS), is honoured to play a positive and constructive role in offering membership benefits to SOS members through the hotel investment.

Earlier in January this year, SOS announced that eligible SOS members will be entitled to five nights of fully-subsidised stay at Citin Seacare Hotel. This new benefit is expected to commence by the second half of the year.

"We hope to do more in this aspect as we are actively sourcing for another hotel investment opportunity in Malaysia," said Mr Lim.

QUICK LOOK

Citin Seacare Hotel (Malaysia (KL)
Tel: **+60 3 2031 7777**
Email: **enquiry@citinpudu.com**

The Seacare Hotel (Singapore)
Tel: **(65) 6818 2688**
Email: **reservations**
theseacarehotel.com.sg

Battling The Haze

We check out what is being done to protect workers, with the chances of a bigger haze menace returning this year.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

The warnings are loud – be prepared for the possibility of an even worse trans-boundary haze this year.

The sombre message was made clear once again on 2 April 2014 when several of ASEAN's Environment Ministers met in Brunei Darussalam to discuss measures of co-operation to mitigate trans-boundary haze.

Coming out of the meeting, Singapore's Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Dr Vivian Balakrishnan said: "The key sticking point was the unwillingness of some governments to share relevant land use and concession maps. Frankly, I am disappointed with the lack of transparency."

NTA taxi leaders led by NTA Advisor Mr Ang Hin Kee, distributing protective masks and eye lotions to taxi drivers at Changi airport last year during the haze.

BEING PREPARED

The haze has begun much earlier this year due to the unusual dry weather from January to March and there is a higher probability of this being an El Nino year with even drier weather in the months ahead.

Singapore's Labour Movement is ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with the government agencies and employers to render whatever assistance is needed to the people in the fight against the haze menace.

Responding to questions from *NTUC This Week*, Dr Balakrishnan said: "Unions also play an important role – they can touch base with their members and unionised companies and provide input and support in planning for the haze now. In the event of haze, unions can also bring workers' concerns to the management's attention and help to resolve these."

UNIONS ON STANDBY

A check with two large unions revealed just how prepared they are when the haze does return and the PSI hovers into dangerous levels.

The National Taxi Association (NTA) which takes care of the welfare of "cabbies" shared that since early March this year, it had already stocked up on masks and eye lotion to deal with the likely worsening haze situation.

And the NTA is ready to help its partners to distribute the masks to the taxi drivers when the need arises.

The Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union (BATU) added that there were lessons to be learnt from the previous haze experience.

BATU's Executive Secretary and NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Zainal Sapari explained: "Many companies may underestimate the severity of the problem. It is important that companies be more proactive and do early preparation in anticipation of the situation worsening overnight. BATU actively engages our management on this."

EMPLOYERS' PART

Emphasising the same point, Dr Balakrishnan said: "The safety and health of workers is of paramount importance and the primary duty of care lies with the employer. Employers should start preparations in anticipation of a possible prolonged haze period in consultation with the Ministry of Manpower's guidelines on protecting employees from the effects of haze. This includes identifying susceptible employees, types of outdoor work to be reduced and risk-mitigating measures that can be implemented if the air quality deteriorates."

Dr Balakrishnan also urged employers to be flexible, especially for the more susceptible workers. They should consider instituting regular breaks and encourage hydration of employees, especially those performing outdoor work.

If prolonged and strenuous outdoor work is not avoidable at a higher PSI, and an employer still requires an employee to do so due to extenuating circumstances, suitable masks should be provided.

He added that employers should also make sure channels of communication are open – so they can tell workers the measures that are being taken to safeguard their well-being, and workers can report adverse effects suffered as a result of the haze.

ASG Zainal noted that while stop work orders may be necessary when the haze reaches certain levels, it may not be possible to implement such orders on those who provide essential services like waste collection, and hence the need to equip them with the necessary gear to minimise the health risks.

Live
THE GOOD LIFE

HURRY!
DON'T MISS OUT!
Exclusively for U Live Members

SHOP, SWIPE & WIN!

Now till 30 Apr 2014

1ST – 30TH Winner: **$100 Cash**
31ST – 100TH Winner: **$50 Cash**
Top 300 Participants: **$15 Event Voucher**
1ST 15,000 participants: **50 LinkPoints***

The top 300 participants with the most number of transactions^ will stand to win cash and/or vouchers!

STEP 1: SMS
- SMS *ULive<space>Name<space>NRIC* to 79777 once to register

STEP 2: Shop
- Shop at any of the 1,000 Plus! merchant outlets by 30 April 2014

FairPrice unity

For full listing, refer to www.plus.com.sg

STEP 3: Swipe
- Swipe your NTUC Plus! Card to accumulate LinkPoints#

BONUS

MIX, MATCH & WIN!

Now till 10 May 2014

Match all the pairs in the shortest time online and receive bonus transactions in the 'Shop, Swipe & Win' Campaign!

Play Now!

**Terms & Conditions apply*

For more information, call us at 6582 3605 or visit www.ulive.sg

*Terms & Conditions: • *Only transaction with LinkPoints Issuance will be considered. All LinkPoints will be credited to members within 2 months after the campaign. • ^The most number of transactions refers to the number of times a member transacts and not the value of the transaction. • #Minimum spending is required at selected merchant outlets. • This campaign is open to U Live members only. • Winners will be notified through phone within 2 months after the campaign. • All personal particulars collected are solely for the tracking of this campaign. • NTUC Club and U Live reserve all rights to change the prizes and T&Cs of this campaign without prior notice. • Other terms & conditions apply.*

This Week In History

***NTUC This Week* turns 50 this year. It was first published in November 1964 as a monthly titled *Perjuangan NTUC*. Perjuangan means struggle in Malay, and the title captured the spirit of the times.**
From our 3 January 2014 issue onwards, *NTUC This Week* will pull out excerpts of main stories from past issues, starting with the very first until the present. This week, we look at December 1969.

By **Marcus Lin**

Our hopes have been more than realised

The giant steps forward

December 1969: About the success of the NTUC Delegates' Seminar, Seminar Chairman C V Devan Nair put it succinctly when he summed up in his Closing Speech: "Every one of us who has participated in the Seminar got reasons to be proud of what we have achieved. The hopes of the organisers of this Seminar have been more than realised."

Never before in this part of the world did trade unionists gather to take a hard look at themselves collectively, and then come up unanimously with well thought out conclusions which, when implemented, will give them a brand new robust trade union movement comparable to the best in the world complete with a streamlined strong Centre and the co-operative social institutions to make it economically more viable.

Never before did a Seminar get such meticulously built-up publicity - *The Straits Times* put out an eight-page Supplement on the opening day, *The Eastern Sun* five pages, *Sin Chew Jit Poh* and *Nanyang Siang Pau* four pages each. Radio and television gave excellent coverage to the pre-Seminar build up and, of course, the Seminar itself for almost a week. The ten working papers submitted to the Seminar received glowing tributes from the Ministers down to the ordinary delegate.

The Seminar was not a publicity gimmick. It was a do or die dare. A great deal of thought had gone into it; the best brains in the country were mustered to plan it and a tremendous lot of work was put into its organisation.

The unions responded splendidly. It is now up to the rank-and-file membership to close their ranks and stand solidly behind to build up a massive organisation capable of looking after the interests of the workers in social and economic fields.

EMPLOYMENT ACT A MAJOR FACTOR OF OUR SUCCESS

LEE: "We have Five years of intense effort before us"

December 1969: Opening the NTUC Seminar on 'Modernisation of the Labour Movement' at the Singapore Conference Hall on 16 November 1969, then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew told a few hundred delegates and observers: "Browsing through your working papers, I was struck by the buoyant and confident note they all exuded. This is as it should be, provided it is not forgotten that we have still some way to go.

"This is no time to talk about amendments to the Employment Act. Anomalies can be ironed out. But the principles which the Act embodies will have to be part of our way of life. Simply, it means that nobody can be a passenger carried by a charitable employer, his shortcomings shielded by his union and his well-being and security guaranteed by a benign Government. We have had two recent lessons of what happens to a people, their economy and their standard of life when workers and the unions take liberties with their country."

He added: "Before you discuss your future, remember how we got here - the past. You have a role to play in transforming a dependent underdeveloped community to an independent industrial society. It depends upon how successfully we can mobilise internal and international capital and expertise, get people to learn the skills and crafts and acquire managerial and marketing know-how. Only then can we produce goods and services efficiently and competitively for international customers."

Modernisation of the Labour Movement

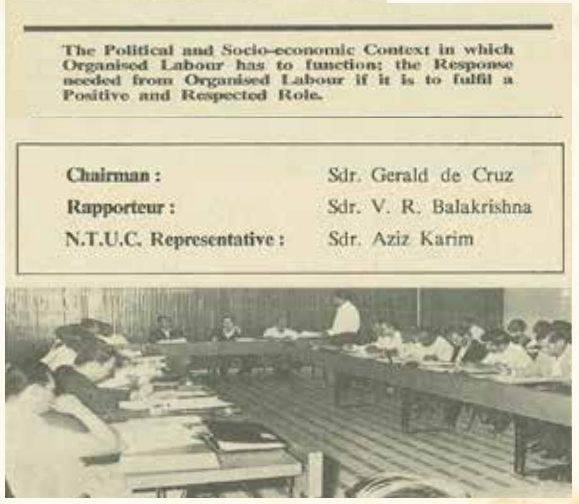
'Critical appraisal of our shortcomings' – Seah

December 1969: Then NTUC Secretary-General Seah Mui Kok said that the hosting of the Seminar was to enable a critical appraisal of the shortcomings of the Labour Movement, and to find adequate means to enable a more positive role to be undertaken by workers, their unions and their leaders.

He said: "The people of Singapore, and trade unionists in particular, have been taken up by this frank confession that the trade union movement needs to be modernised. The NTUC has taken a very bold decision in this respect. It has admitted that the trade union movement which it leads has not kept pace with the rest of society.

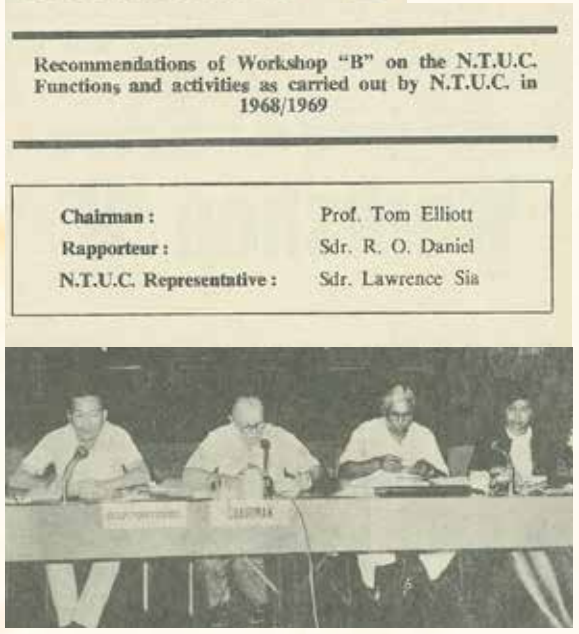
"The NTUC is confident that from the dynamic workers of Singapore, whose efforts yield us a gross national product second only in Asia to Japan, will come the necessary human and financial resources."

WORKSHOP 'A'


The Political and Socio-economic Context in which Organised Labour has to function; the Response needed from Organised Labour if it is to fulfil a Positive and Respected Role.

Chairman :	Sdr. Gerald de Cruz
Rapporteur :	Sdr. V. R. Balakrishna
N.T.U.C. Representative :	Sdr. Aziz Karim

WORKSHOP 'B'


Recommendations of Workshop "B" on the N.T.U.C. Functions and activities as carried out by N.T.U.C. in 1968/1969

Chairman :	Prof. Tom Elliott
Rapporteur :	Sdr. R. O. Daniel
N.T.U.C. Representative :	Sdr. Lawrence Sia

Four Important Principles

DR. GOH: NO PRIVILEGED TREATMENT

December 1969: Then Finance Minister Dr Goh Keng Swee outlined four important principles for the successful development of a workers' co-operative movement in Singapore. He told unions that they should not expect financial aid from the Government but reiterated that technical aid would be given if asked.

He emphasised this point to allay fears by a number of businessmen in the Republic that the Government intends to extend privileged treatment to enterprises in which it has a financial interest. He dismissed these fears as completely without foundation.

The four principles:

- "The first principle is that the co-operative must be fully competitive with private enterprise. It cannot expect privileged treatment by the Government."
- "The second principle, which derives logically from the first, is that the Labour Movement should engage in co-operative enterprises in those fields in which it has a natural built-in advantage."
- "The third principle is that the highest standards of integrity must be established and maintained."
- "The fourth principle is that the co-operative must have effective management."

RAJA: Unions have crucial role to play in a modernising Singapore

December 1969: Then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Labour S Rajaratnam refuted the belief among some unionists "that in the new environment now being created in Singapore the role of trade unions must diminish in importance."

On the contrary, he asserted "that in a truly modernised and industrialised Singapore the role of trade unions will not only grow in importance but they will and must play an actively crucial part in the total life of a modernising Singapore."

He added: "Reading through the working papers prepared for this Seminar, I could not help but note the profound, almost qualitative, change that has taken place in recent years in the outlook and attitude of trade union leadership in Singapore. I am not so much concerned with the contents and conclusions arrived at in your papers, but with your new approach to problems affecting trade unions in particular and labour in general.

"It is so radically different that I am certain that many old-style trade union leaders will find this approach not only alien and incomprehensible, but even a negation of what they conceived of as fundamentals of trade union theory and practice."

WORKSHOP 'C'

Chairman :	Sdr. S. R. Nathan
Rapporteur :	Sdr. Yeo Toon Joo
N.T.U.C. Representative :	Sdr. N. Govindasamy

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Workshop on: "Human and Financial Resources to ensure that the Trade Union Movement will realise its effective Role in the Tripartite Social Partnership which forms the Basis of Singapore's Industrial Advancement."

Closing Session of the Plenary – Speech by Mr. Devan Nair

December 1969: In his Closing Speech on 19 November 1969, Seminar Chairman C V Devan Nair said: "Such a Seminar would have been unthinkable five or 10 years ago in the days of 50-cent trade unionism. For the first time in the history of the trade union movement in this Republic, and in this part of the world, trade unionists gathered together to discuss in a serious, sober and responsible way the past, the present and the future outlook of organised labour.

"And we have a wealth of materials to draw upon from the papers presented by the Seminar Committee from the contributions made by the Prime Minister, Labour Minister and Finance Minister. The Prime Minister gave the participants an understanding in depth of the total situation, internal as well as international, in which the people of Singapore find themselves in today.

"The Labour Movement cannot insulate itself from the harsh realities of life. Surrounding circumstances can prove unsettling, very volatile and explosive and it would be a piece of abysmal folly to a few that the calamities which have overtaken other developing countries may not yet overtake us."

What's Happening, Where

1 U Sports Golf Carnival

Calling all golf fans! Tee off to Orchid Country Club's decadent weekend of golfing fun! Event highlights include Crazy Hour Special $-For-$ range top-ups, free one-on-one golf coaching with in-house Golf Pros, free Video Swing Analysis/Swing Workshop, Golf Skills Challenge, Pan-West Golf Club Demo & Equipment Sale, Phil Brew Golf Academy Recruitment Special, and not forgetting lots of food, wine and whiskey. Plus, bring the kids for some wholesome family entertainment. Activities include Wii Golf Games, a Golf Movie Screening and a Children's Magic Show.

3 – 4 May, 11am to 6pm, Driving Range, Orchid Country Club, 1 Orchid Club Road
For fee details and other enquiries, call ***6750 2198****.*

2 Treasure Venture 2014 @ Sibu Island Resort

This June hols, join U Family's autoventure - The Island Edition for your family's idyllic getaway! Relax in a private Island getaway surrounded by beautiful white beaches and pristine waters and enjoy an array of land and sea activities. Other highlights include: meeting the free roaming deer in the resort, snorkelling in the clear waters of Kukus Island, conquering the Treasure Venture Tribal Quest, enjoying the themed BBQ with bonfire, and jungle trekking to explore the island's wonderful nature.

6 - 8 Jun, Sibu Island Resort, Malaysia (flag-off at McDonald's @ West Coast Park at 6am), from $388 per adult and $218 per child (NTUC Member), from $418 per adult and $248 per child (Public), early bird discounts available for bookings before 31 Apr (includes limited edition Treasure Venture tank top for every participant).

For registration and more details, log on to ***www.ufamily.org.sg*** *and look under "Events". For enquiries, email* ***ufamilyevent@ntuc.org.sg.***

3 Learning Amazement

Your little scientists will get a kick out of learning from these cool and wacky outdoor and indoor science experiments.

Make a Mini Lava Lamp*: Learn all about density when you build your own mini lava lamps and effect a chemical reaction to see the lava rise and sink.*
Rocket Blast Off and Gushing Geyser*: Witness a rocket blast off, learn all about Newton's third law of motion, and set off a gushing geyser! Also learn to make your very own mini rocket.*
Aerodynamics and Stunt Planes*: Learn all about the four forces of flight, then build and fly the fabulous DipperDo stunt plane. It's the only plane that flies in a loop to land back in your hand!*
21 Jun, 2pm – 5pm, The Marquee @ Science Centre Singapore, $8 (NTUC Member), $10 (Child aged 3 to 12), $16 (Public), $20 (Child).*
For registration and more details, log on to ***www.ufamily.org.sg*** *and look under "Events".*
For enquiries, email ***ufamilyevent@ntuc.org.sg.***

4 Job Fair @ e2i

Head on down to NTUC's Employment and Employability Institute to check out about 1,500 job vacancies in the Cleaning, Construction, Hospitality, Landscape, Logistics, Security, Services and Transport industries.

23 - 24 Apr, 10am, 12noon, 2pm, Level 1, Registration Hub, e2i (Employment and Employability Institute), 80 Jurong East Street 21, Registration closes on 22 Apr or upon full registration. To register, log on to ***e2i.com.sg*** *and look under "Upcoming Events".*

5 Community Drum Circle

Discover the wonderful world of drumming! Besides offering a therapeutic form of musical expression, you will delight in getting into the rhythm with newfound friends! Drums provided.

26 Apr, 2.30pm – 4.30pm, Scarlet City, Level 4, AMK Hub, 53 Ang Mo Kio Ave 3, $12 inclusive of beverages (U Live Member), $16 (NTUC Member), $20 (Public), Registration closes 17 Apr. To register, email <Your Full Name>, <NRIC>, <Date Of Birth>, <Contact No.>, <Union you belong to, if any> to: ***chin_teck@ntucclub.com.sg*** *or call* ***6582 7497****.*

Want to list your upcoming event? Drop us an email at LMNewsroom@ntuc.org.sg.

新加坡劳商职联把触角伸向专经执人员

新加坡劳商职工联合会于2014年3月21日举行四年一度的代表大会，并推选新一届的执行委员。新执委除了将带领工会积极进取，与时俱进，同时也将把重点放在专业人士、经理和执行人员（简称专经执人员）身上。

目前专经执人员在新加坡劳商职联会员人数当中约占三成。随着踏入职场的年轻一代接受更高的教育，预计专经执人员的人数将进一步攀高。

有鉴于此，该会积极开展各种活动，把触角伸向专经执人员。新加坡劳商职联秘书长杨自廉说：“我们举办了很多活动，有的非常成功，有的则不太理想。倘若出席的人数不如预期，我们会另想其他新点子。我们会不断尝试，并从中吸取经验。像我们举办了潜水活动，没想到吸引很多人前来参加。”

三巴旺集选区议员，同时也是新加坡劳商职联顾问王鼎昆指出，如何满足年轻国人的期许和因应他们的需求，乃成功的关键。

随着专经执人员不断壮大，预计到了2030年，大约三分之二的劳动队伍将是专经执人员。因此，如何吸引他们加入并代表他们发声，将是工会面对的一大挑战。

职总助理秘书长兼新加坡劳商职联执行秘书郑德源说：“我们一定要做足准备工作，迎接未来的挑战。”

事实上，新一届执委已充分反映了今日的劳动队伍：近乎一半的领导层是专经执人员。另一点值得注意的是，新执委当中包含了年轻和资深的工运领袖，同时也有女性出任要职。新加坡劳商职工联合会荣誉秘书长德培华表示，这标志了工会迈向性别均等，以及积极为领导层注入新血的决心。

双语图书培养孩童对双语的兴趣

新加坡华文教研中心与职总属下的新苗师范学院推出四本双语图书，帮助孩童学习华语和英语。这项计划获得李光耀双语基金赞助。

这系列双语图书旨在培养孩子们的品格，并通过有趣互动的方式激发孩童对双语的兴趣。除了阅读，教师也可从故事中创造出各种活动，如戏剧、歌唱和游戏等，促进孩童的思考能力和让他们发挥创意。

职总优儿学府属下的The Little Skool-House On-The-Green“小小家庭”托儿所校长Stella Pereira认为，这套双语图书是很好的教材，让教师们可以同时教导孩童两种语文。

她说：“这套图书用华文和英文说同一个故事，让家长能以两种语文跟孩子沟通，有助于加强孩子的语文能力。”

她透露，校方自今年3月初就开始使用这系列双语图书，并发现这些图书有效辅助校方现有的课程。

这系列双语图书将在4月底以前分发给全国1600所学前教育中心，每所中心各获两套图书。家长也能够将这些书本借回家，陪同孩子一起阅读。

清洁公司须持有执照才能提供清洁服务

本地清洁公司须在今年9月1日前取得营业执照，才能提供清洁服务。

业者从即日起可向国家环境局申请执照，而申请条件规定，公司须与员工签署书面雇佣合约，并为员工提供培训及渐进式薪金制。这将确保清洁员工的薪金与他们的技能、培训和生产力挂钩，预计约5万5000名清洁员工将在这项计划下获益。

职总主导的渐进式薪金制旨在帮助清洁工友提升技能和生产力，以获取更高的薪金和更好的职业发展。而今，这些努力已初见成效。

职总助理秘书长兼职总U关怀中心署长蔡纳说：“职总对这项新计划表示欢迎，因为这将帮助清洁业的工友获取更高的薪酬。执照管制对清洁业来说是个重大的转变，这将使整个行业变得更专业化，让清洁工友具备更高的技能、更高的生产力和更好的职业规划。”

“不过，工友、服务供应商和服务买家须通力合作，才能取得双赢的局面。工友须提升技能以提高生产力，服务供应商须提供更好的雇佣待遇，而服务买家也须愿意支付更多，以获取优质可靠的服务。”

渐进式薪金

人力部、劳动力发展局与国家环境局发表联合文告，全面采纳由劳资政代表组成的清洁工人事务小组所提出的建议，为清洁工友制定基本起薪。

此外，清洁公司自今年4月1日起向环境局申请执照时，须呈交一份渐进式薪金计划，列明各类别清洁员工的基本薪金。雇主也须为清洁员工提供薪水单，而雇佣合约上列明的薪金须与雇主呈交的渐进式薪金计划相符。

“职总周报
2014年4月6日
售价 60c
MCI (P) 183/12/2013

雇佣法令修订后
将为工友提供更好的保障

修订后的雇佣法令将能更好地保障工友的权益，职总、工运领袖和工友对此表示欢迎。

雇佣法令的多项修改内容于2014年4月1日起生效，为更多工友提供更好的保障，尤其是专业人士、经理和执行人员。

我国在1968年制定雇佣法令。作为我国主要的劳工法，雇佣法令旨在确保企业维持竞争力的同时，让工友享有合理的雇佣条件和待遇。

职总对雇佣法令的修订表示欢迎，而且职总主导的多项建议已纳入修改内容之中。

职总助理秘书长兼职总专业人士、经理和执行人员署署长郑德源说：“我很高兴看到职总的多项倡议在这一轮的修订中被采纳和实施，这将让工友获得更好的保障。”

他还指出，修订后的雇佣法令将能更好地保障专业人士、经理和执行人员的权益。举例说，过去被裁退的雇员须为公司工作至少三年才能享有赔偿，而今他们只需在公司服务两年就能享有赔偿。

他补充说：“这次的修改内容具有不少突破性的举措，尤其是对专业人士、经理和执行人员的保障。我很感激劳资政三方紧密合作，花了很多时间了解我们的立场，并归纳出多项有利于工友的修改内容。”

创造双赢的局面

人力部代部长陈川仁在接受本报专访时强调，修订雇佣法令是为了给工友提供更好的保障。

“修订雇佣法令是为了加强对工友的保障，同时让雇主更灵活地落实新规。若企业能保持竞争力，便可创造更多就业机会，而工友最终也将受惠。

— 人力部代部长陈川仁

他说：“作为我国主要的劳工法，雇佣法令旨在确保企业维持竞争力的同时，让工友享有合理的雇佣条件和待遇。”

“修订雇佣法令是为了加强对工友的保障，同时让雇主更灵活地落实新规。若企业能保持竞争力，便可创造更多就业机会，而工友最终也将受惠。”

他补充说：“整体而言，修订后的雇佣法令将使新加坡具备良好的雇佣规范，为所有在新加坡工作的工友推展更好的工作场所。此举也有助于我们建立更好的终身学习框架，并提高生产力，以便创造更优质的工作和建设更美好的新加坡。”