

ntuc

MAY DAY

AWARDS

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DISTINGUISHED COMRADE OF LABOUR

Lee Hsien Loong

Senior Minister

Nominated by the National Trades Union Congress

Throughout many years of dedicated public service, Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong worked hard to strengthen the tripartite partnership between NTUC and its unions, workers, businesses, and the Government of Singapore. Through tripartism, the Government fostered harmonious labour-management relations and a conducive business environment, grew Singapore's economy, and steadily improved workers' lives over the years.

When Singapore ran into crises, such as the 1985 recession, the global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, SM Lee and his team took care of workers. They worked hard to protect and support the economy, so that workers would not lose their livelihoods. When necessary, SM Lee led the nation to take difficult but necessary measures, such as cutting CPF contributions to cut costs and preserve jobs. Each time, workers and businesses rallied to support the Government. And thankfully, each time the measures worked, enabling Singapore to emerge stronger.

SM Lee championed skills upgrading and lifelong learning to help workers keep up with changing employment demands and stay competitive. He led the Government and NTUC to put in place structures, programmes and investments to support continuous education and training. Hence, workers are being equipped with employable skills not just today, but also in the future. In 2008, he launched the Skills Redevelopment Programme, which fostered a culture of lifelong learning and workforce resilience, growing into today's SkillsFuture programme and movement.

SM Lee paid close attention to uplifting lower-income workers. He introduced structural schemes, such as the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) and the Progressive Wage Model, so that lower-income workers could improve their lives year after year, leaving no one behind. Measures for lower-income workers became a regular element of the National Wages Council's annual wage recommendations.

SM Lee also pushed to improve the safety, health, and well-being of all workers in the workplace. Strong steps were taken to substantially lower workplace accident and casualty rates and keep local and migrant workers safe and protected at work.

When he was Prime Minister, NTUC benefited from SM Lee's strong support for a wide range of initiatives. These included NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) to help jobseekers find employment, NTUC's Job Security Council, and NTUC's Company Training Committee (CTC) initiative to help companies transform their businesses and workforce.

The Distinguished Comrade of Labour Award is hereby presented to SM Lee in recognition of his sterling contributions and decades of dedication towards improving the lives and livelihoods of our workers.