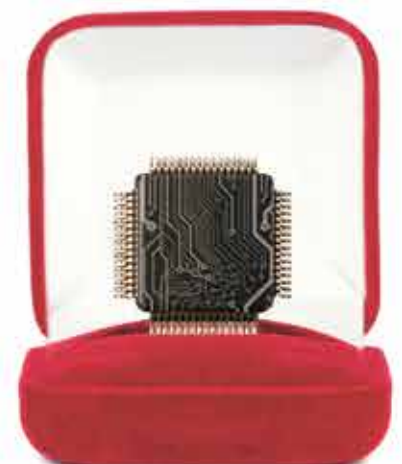
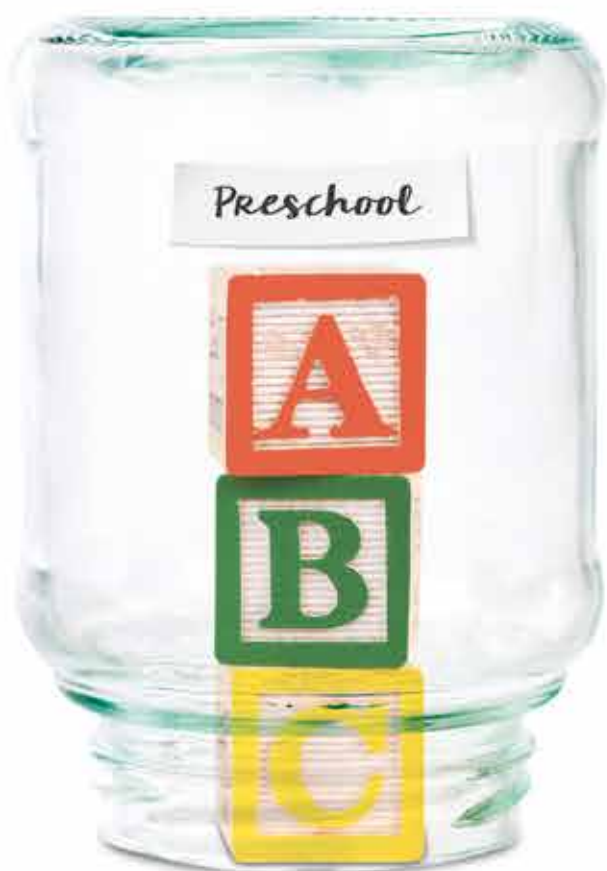


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UNCOVERING PROGRESSIVE PRIORITIES

This year's National Day Rally lifts the lid on the nation's priorities for the future – growing the preschool sector, fighting diabetes and Singapore's move to become a Smart Nation. Find what our Labour Movement representatives have to say about these.



TOP STORIES



6 SMOU Steps Onboard to Help Seafarers

We meet up with 26 seafarers whose salaries were delayed while out at sea.



9 Unveiling Stephen Riady Auditorium

NTUC's auditorium gets a new name, following a \$10 million donation to the NTUC-Education and Training Fund.



12 Face to Face with Nigel Tan

The new president of Singapore Teacher's Union talks to us about future-proofing students and educators.

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PM Lee's National Day Rally 2017



Brown rice in NTUC FairPrice



Children at the garden of MOE Kindergarten at Punggol



Let's hear what our Labour Movement has to say about the three topics raised...

Story by **Avelyn Ng** and **Jonathan Tan**
Photos by **Ministry of Communications and Information**

Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong delivered his National Day Rally speech on 20 August 2017 at the ITE College Central in Malay, Mandarin, and English, as per tradition. He focused on three long-term issues – building up preschools, fighting diabetes and making Singapore a 'Smart Nation' (*more details on Page 4*).

PRESCHOOL: UPLIFTING THE SECTOR

"The fact that PM Lee mentioned the impact they have in shaping the characters and lives of our children in their early years will ensure that more parents recognise that these are educators in the preschools, not well paid nannies, and we must work alongside them and treat them with a higher level of respect," commented Executive Secretary of Education Services Union (ESU) Ang Hin Kee.

He added: "With more resources going into this area, I hope the results will go into elevating the salaries of these teachers. With

regard to our emphasis on places and capacity, it means that we will need to ramp up on the teaching and hiring and we will need to do a lot more to get people interested in starting a career, or training courses, in the preschool sector. ESU is happy to work alongside the government agencies and partners to attract teachers with the right attitude and expertise to join the industry."

DIABETES: TAKING OWNERSHIP OF HEALTH

"I did a little research – in 1965, 18 was the median age of our population. Now, it is 42. We managed to progress to today's Singapore from those [low-quality living] conditions because we invested in the population then [to bring about changes]. If we stop investing, thinking we have arrived, I think that would be the beginning of the end.

"For a population that's ageing, how do you keep the population in good shape for as long as possible so that they can be an asset instead of becoming a liability to themselves, their families and the country? Our progress is not something gifted to us, we created it. It cannot be done on our behalf, we have to do our part," said NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How.

Executive Secretary of National Transport Workers' Union Melvin Yong said: "NTWU runs 43 canteens islandwide. I think we can do better



by working with the operators to make sure we provide healthier options at all our canteens as part of our efforts to support the national fight against diabetes.”

SMART NATION: BRIGHTER FUTURE, BETTER LIVES

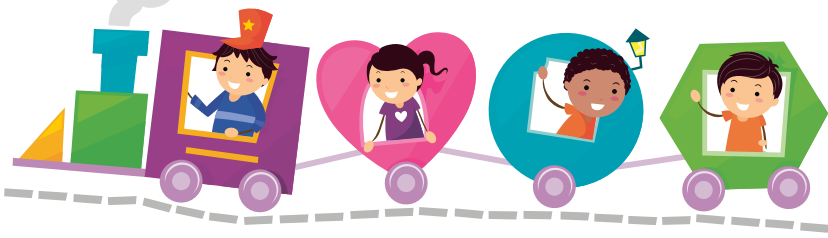
“I’m glad my forecast is correct – productivity is seeing a positive uptrend. That is very good news for the Labour Movement. The collective policies of various ministries, in partnership with tripartite partners, would have contributed to the increase. In the Future Jobs, Skills and Training [FJST] Department analysis, we said a Smart Nation will create lots of jobs, but today it has gone beyond just jobs to make our lives more enriching, safer and better,” said Director of NTUC FJST Department Patrick Tay.

NTUC’s Industry Transformation and Productivity Director Desmond Choo added: “The examples mentioned emphasise how older workers, if they decide to venture out and try technology, can do better in their jobs and even in new industries. The next step for us as a Labour Movement is to continue to work with workers, especially middle-aged and older ones, to overcome their fears of technology, help them identify what they can be skilled in and help them on their journey towards reskilling themselves.”

“ I think all three points are all very critical for all working people. Preschools give everyone a good start right from the beginning so no one is disadvantaged. Health is the most important component in our lives. Without it, we will not be able to sustain ourselves to work for our families. The push towards a Smart Nation is also very relevant. We can’t stand still with the world evolving around us and everyone is going towards that direction. We have to train our people, even though it may seem intimidating for our older workers. The Labour Movement is doing its part to upskill them and give them exposure. We can work together as a nation without anyone left behind.”



NTUC President Mary Liew



Preschool

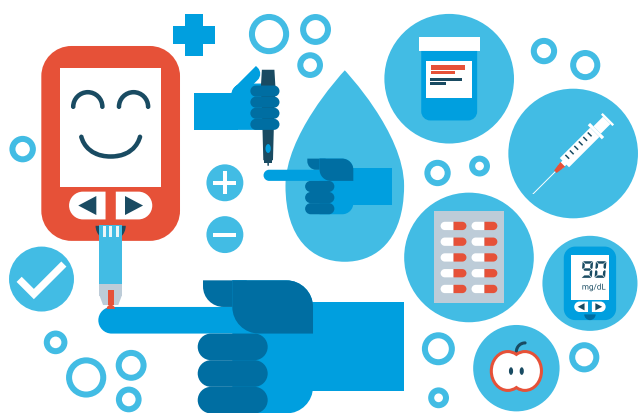
Stepping up from its investment in preschool education since five years ago, the Government will again double its spending on preschools.

It plans to add 40,000 places to a total of about 200,000 through three key initiatives – adding of Early Years Centres (EYCs) for infants up to 4 years old in new HDB developments, scaling up Ministry of Education's 15 kindergartens to 50, and establishing a centralised National Institute of Early Childhood Development to upgrade the profession and attract more to join.

The first four EYCs announced in February 2017 are currently under construction in Punggol by NTUC My First Skool and PCF Sparkletots, and are expected to be operational in 2018. My First Skool was brought up in Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong's National Day Rally Speech as one of the preschool anchor operators that has raised its standards by piloting an arts programme at one of its 130 campuses.

CEO of parent company, NTUC First Campus (NFC) Chan Tee Seng said: "Quality preschool education is a critical contributor to social mobility and we want to ensure that every child, regardless of his or her social, developmental or financial circumstances has access to it. Some 16 per cent of our enrolment are reserved for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. We are also a pioneer of the KidStart programme, partnering the Ministry of Social and Family Development in reaching out to lower-income families.

"PM Lee spoke about the importance of the early years in developing language and other skills needed for long-term success in life. It is an area that NFC believes strongly in. Since 2014, NFC has successfully implemented a ground-breaking Relationships-Based Curriculum for children aged birth to 3. The curriculum emphasises the importance of relationships as the foundation for the child's sense of well-being and active engagement, and since the introduction, our children are happier, more engaged in their learning. This has given our teachers a great sense of satisfaction."



Diabetes

While Singaporeans have one of the longest life expectancies in the world, PM Lee cautioned that we experience eight years of ill health in old age on average. Diabetes is a huge culprit, with one in nine Singaporeans, and three in 10 aged over 60 years old, suffering from it.

To this, PM Lee encouraged Singaporeans to get regular medical check-ups, exercise more, as well as eat healthily and lesser. He further elaborated on how several partners have come onboard to make the lifestyle changes more affordable and accessible.



Smart Nation

PM Lee started on his third topic by defining Smart Nation as Singapore taking full advantage of information technology to create new jobs and business opportunities as well as to make the economy more productive, lives more convenient, and the city more outstanding.

He admitted that while Singapore is compact and highly connected with a population that is digitally literate, Singapore still lags behind other countries, especially in areas such as electronic payments and making use of a network of sensors and CCTVs to support national security and emergency response.

On a micro level, he shared how technology can also transform daily aspects of life such as transport and shopping. He lauded projects such as NTUC FairPrice's unmanned, cashless Cheers store as an example of how traditional businesses can continue to serve their customers while increasing efficiency and savings by reinventing themselves.

"These small projects are instructive. They help us learn about and adapt to new technology in our daily lives, and prepare us to make bigger adjustments later on," said PM Lee.

He highlighted that in order for the Smart Nation initiative to succeed, we need to urgently build up our talent pool. Scholarships and schemes such as SkillsFuture and Professional Conversion Programmes can help Singaporeans develop their skills, create new jobs and opportunities.

Sharing his thoughts, United Workers of Electronics & Electrical Industries General Secretary Tan Richard said: "We have been working together with our companies in the implementation of digital systems and smart technology such as robotics. Getting our workers updated with new skills and knowledge on how to work with new technologies is a priority and will help in justifying why they deserve better salaries. Their jobs are no longer like those of old, where they simply operate machines. Their roles will evolve to become like specialists, where they work with robots."

GOOD TO KNOW



NTUC FairPrice is offering discounts on healthy food such as brown rice till the end of August 2017. From September, the Ministry of Health is offering Singaporeans over the age of 40 health check-ups at \$5, a big discount from the usual \$100. For more details, enquire at clinics under the Community Health Assist Scheme.

GOOD TO KNOW



NTUC LearningHub offers a range of information technology courses to help Singaporeans pick up essential skills to thrive in a Smart Nation. For a full listing, visit <https://www.ntuclearninghub.com/courses/courses-by-category/it-academy/>.

A Big Heart for Little Ones

Screaming toddlers in the hallway, demanding parents at the door... what drives preschool teachers to do what they do? We find out from two passionate individuals at NTUC First Campus.

Story and Photos by **Shukry Rashid**

Supportive Environment

Taking care of younger children seemed like a step back in her career as a preschool teacher to some of her friends, especially considering that she has a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. But 27-year-old Noor Hasni Osman did not mind because that is where her passion is.

She first joined the Early Childhood Care and Education industry six years ago because she found it fulfilling. But when she started her career at My First Skool as a teacher, it was not all smooth-sailing as it was not quite like how she imagined.

Ask any mother and they will say that taking care of a toddler can be quite a handful. Imagine what preschool teachers have to do every single day.

"When I first started, it was not easy because I was in charge of a class of toddlers. But the support that I got from my employers was welcoming; I had my principal and senior teachers give me advice and lend a hand when things go out of hand," added Hasni.

Taking care of and teaching older children is a logical career progression for many preschool teachers. But this was not the case for Hasni who has always been more interested in younger children.

"Working with younger children helps me to develop a sharper mind. This helps me communicate better with people," said Hasni,



who joined NTUC First Campus' The Caterpillar Cove as an English teacher three years ago.

TEACHER TO MENTOR

To advance her career, Hasni's principal nurtured her into a leader and mentor to other preschool teachers. She recently graduated with the Advanced Certificate in Early Years from SEED Institute.

She is currently the infant care lead at The Caterpillar Cove's Devan Nair Institute for

Employment and Employability Institute outlet, and mentors four other preschool teachers. Together, they take care of 12 children aged between two to 18 months.

Recalling the challenges she has had, Hasni thanked her mentors for guiding her throughout her journey.

She explained: "They didn't just inspire me to be a good teacher and educator to the children but also a better individual."



No Qualification? No Problem!

When 58-year-old Tay Bee Tuan started working with NTUC First Campus, formerly known as NTUC Childcare, she never thought that she would end up teaching there for 37 years!

A friendly and well-respected Chinese teacher, she joined the preschool with just two GCE O Level passes.

When she started as an assistant teacher, her role was to render routine care to the children and assist teachers during lessons. However, Mdm Tay has always had the passion for teaching. This did not go unnoticed by a principal she worked with, who saw her potential despite her lack of formal qualifications.

The principal recommended Mdm Tay's upgrade from assistant teacher to Chinese teacher, and she has been doing what she loves ever since.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

As fulfilling as her career has been, it has been even more fulfilling to receive visits by her old students and their parents. One of her former students recently made a breakthrough in skin cancer research. She is very happy to have made a difference in these children's lives by giving them a good foundation in their early years.

Off the Sinking Ship

Singapore Maritime Officers' Union steps up to help 26 seafarers get their rightful dues totalling to over US\$320,000. We bring you the full report.

Story and Photos by **Avelyn Ng**



For the crew on board chemical tanker Captain Silver, the past six months have been gruelling. Their employer, a ship management company in Singapore, is one of the victims in the slowing maritime industry. It was not until salaries stopped coming in that the crew started raising red flags.

The first delay was for February's wages, which came in a month later for most crew members. The remainder, and a part of March's wages only came in May. After hearing their employer's explanation about financial difficulties, the crew reluctantly held out.

However, when June came and their employer was still unable to issue the pending salaries in full, they decided to sail the vessel into Singapore waters and seek assistance. The crew's captain, Neeraj Khanna, contacted Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) and a P&I (protection and indemnity) Club in Singapore that provides P&I insurance to seafarers under the newly-amended international Maritime Labour Convention (effective from January 2017).

THE INTERVENTION

SMOU and Singapore Organisation of Seamen industrial relations officers, a lawyer and this reporter paid a visit to Captain Silver on 10 July 2017.

The crew was low on provisions and lube oil, and had requested for technical maintenance several times from their company but to no avail. During our stay there, a small fire broke out in the engine room which was caused by the failure of the cooling system. Despite the hardship that they were going through, the captain and the crew performed their duties professionally in response to the emergency. The fire was put out almost immediately.

The lawyer, together with the union, explained the legal proceedings should the crew collectively decide to call for a "ship arrest" – a common recourse for such cases. It is a warrant from the court to seize the ship. The vessel will then be sold via auction by the court to recover the crew's wages and pay off any creditor's claims, if any. The lawyer answered various concerns from the crew such as the chances of success, repatriation needs, required

documentation and waiting period.

While all parties were preparing for the worst following the visit, good news came on 27 July 2017 – the P&I Club and the ship owner had come to an agreement to co-pay the crew, avoiding the need for a ship arrest.

A total of over US\$320,000 was reimbursed to 26 crew members on 3 August 2017. SMOU was present to facilitate the five-hour long process between the crew and the lawyers from P&I Club, before sending the crew to the airport for their paid flights home.

"When I'm back, I will look after my family first. My father is old and my mother is having spinal issues. I am the only one working who can help them. They have been asking about my salary but I did not tell them about what's happening here. It will only make them more worried," said Third Officer Anjan Samanta, 27, who was owed over US\$10,000. He plans to

continue his career as a seafarer and find work after a few months' rest in India.

WORRYING CLIMATE

"The current maritime industry outlook is still uncertain due to the weak global demand and excess shipping capacity. These have led to weaker earnings for shipping companies and for some, bankruptcy. Mergers and alliance partnerships are also taking place to widen their reach and increase the margins through economies of scale. The concern is how all these will affect the employment of maritime workers.

"This year, out of 75 cases SMOU handled, 27 were related to wage disputes. We may be expecting more cases to surface in the coming months due to the uncertainty of the current maritime industry outlook. The union will continue to do our best to protect seafarer's rights," said Secretary of SMOU Gwee Guo Duan.



SMOU Industrial Relations Officer Kelvin Lin talks to affected officers to discuss their concerns and available options.



STU: Taking New Paths

Newly-elected Singapore Teachers' Union General Secretary Mike Thiruman unveils plans to look into the well-being of teachers in schools.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**



The Singapore Teachers' Union (STU) has a new president and general secretary following its recent National Delegates' Conference held on 22 July 2017. Some 60 delegates attended the conference.

STU veteran Mike Thiruman has been elected as the new general secretary after serving as its president for 13 years, while Nigel Tan takes over from him as the new president (*see page 12 for the exclusive interview*).

LEADERSHIP RENEWAL

The youngest person elected was 30-year-old junior college teacher Goh Huishan. Mr Thiruman hopes the union can interest more young people to come forward and serve in the years ahead.

"You can send emails and letters but it is not going to happen. We must be visible in the school scene, and the principals who are the key must see us as partners," he explained.

TEACHER-WELLNESS

Mr Thiruman said another key focus for STU in the coming months is firming up teacher-wellness talks in schools.

STU has already engaged a teacher-wellness consultant who will be conducting talks from September.

"Teacher-wellness is student-wellness, and if you really care about the students' well-being, you must take care of the teachers first".

You don't want a teacher to be stressed out or unwell when going into the classroom. His or her performance will not be there and the kids lose out," explained Mr Thiruman.

STU plans to approach schools at the end of the year so that the talks can be scheduled for 2018.



Insurance Sector: Tackling Challenges Ahead

The Singapore Insurance Employees' Union (SIEU) and employers discuss current issues in the insurance industry in a dialogue.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

A dialogue with nearly 100 human resource personnel from leading insurance companies in Singapore was held with the Singapore Insurance Employees' Union (SIEU) as part of the Financial Services Career Week held from 14 to 23 August 2017 at the NTUC Centre.

FUTURE-PROOFING WORKERS

During the three-hour dialogue, both employers and union officials talked about the disruptions affecting insurance industry workers.

Participants also identified some of the jobs at risk and uppermost in their minds is to work hand-in-hand to address workers' concerns in this area.

Aviva's People Business Partner Jeremy Cai said: "We talked about the resources that we can all bring together in order to better look at what the future needs are from the capability point of view. This way, we can help our workers not just plug the short-term gaps but have a longer-term view of what the future looks like and what they need to build on in order to get there."

BOOSTING PME REPRESENTATION

Reaching out to professionals, managers and executives (PMEs) was another topic discussed.

"It is clear to the employers that for the unions to continue to be relevant, the voices of the PMEs have to be heard because majority of the workers in our industry are PMEs.

"If they are not represented in any way by the unions, essentially they are at a disadvantage," said Cen Hong Siu Ming, Singapore National Employers Federation Insurance Industry Group chairman and a senior vice president with Great Eastern Life Assurance.

Over the next few months, SIEU will be broadening its outreach to encourage more PMEs in the industry to become union members.

“Our collective agreements (CA) with the rank-and-file workers are expiring at the end of the year and it is a good time to start talking to them. Different companies want to move at different speeds and this is a good opportunity to engage them about organising and union membership.”

SIEU General Secretary Luke Hee – The union has 25 branches and negotiates core items in the CAs on a group level.



Four New Unions Join IWETF

The associate members will collaborate with the existing IWETF unions to develop union leadership, among other initiatives.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

Four unions have joined the ranks of the Industrial Workers Education and Training Fund (IWETF) unions as associate members. They are the Attractions, Resorts & Entertainment Union, Education Services Union, Healthcare Services Employees' Union and Union of Security Employees (USE).

The IWETF came about when the Pioneer Industries Employees Union and the Singapore Industrial Labour Organisation restructured in 1982 to form 10 unions.

The 10 unions are: Building Construction And Timber Industries Employees' Union; Chemical Industries Employees' Union; Food, Drinks and Allied Workers Union; Keppel FELS Employees' Union; Natsteel Employees' Union; National Transport Workers' Union; Metal Industries Workers' Union; Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union; Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union; and United Workers of Electronics & Electrical Industries.

The four new associate members signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the 10 IWETF unions on 12 August 2017 at a two-day IWETF gathering in Batam.

NTUC Assistant Secretaries-General (ASG) Zainal Sapari and Cham Hui Fong witnessed the signing. ASG Zainal is also the chairperson of IWETF.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS UPGRADING

The associate members will work together with the IWETF by building on the good work that has been achieved over the years.

"The MOU signing ceremony marks the beginning for the IWETF unions to expand its network and collaborate with the associate unions in areas of trade union leadership, skills upgrading of high potential union leaders and keeping abreast of current trends and developments that can have an impact on the Labour Movement.

"Moving forward, the IWETF unions and the four associate unions will look for opportunities to strengthen and expand the network," said ASG Zainal.

According to USE President Hareenderpal Singh, the collaboration is especially timely as the security industry is in the process of transforming.

"We look forward to working together with the other unions in the IWETF to upskill our workers so they can be as ready as they can for this transformation," he added.

Raffles Country Club Workers' Compensation Package Finalised

The Raffles Country Club closes its doors on 31 July 2018, with affected staff taken care of.

Story and Photo by **Ramesh Subbaraman**



The compensation package for 119 staff affected by the closure of Raffles Country Club (RCC) has been finalised. They will receive the compensation on their last day of work.

Briefing sessions were held by RCC management on 21 August 2017 together with officials from the Attractions, Resorts & Entertainment Union (AREU) and NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute).

The RCC site at Tuas was acquired by the Singapore Government on 4 January 2017 to make way for the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail project.

This is the second country club to be acquired after the Jurong Country Club, which closed on 31 December 2016.

COMPENSATION DETAILS

According to the RCC management, discussions on the retrenchment package began in January and were completed in July 2017.

Under the package, staff with less than two years of service will receive two weeks' basic pay.

Those who have worked two years and above will be eligible for one month's basic pay per year, capped at 25 years. This includes all staff who have been re-employed at age 62.

All affected staff will receive a \$1,500 training grant and a one-year union membership with AREU.

"It was very responsible of the management to give advance notice and take care of the workers in terms of their training. The management is giving them time-off to attend training. From now, we will be very focused on training the affected workers for their next employment," said AREU Executive Secretary Toh Hwee Tin.

HELPING WORKERS

Workers we spoke to were happy with the compensation package. Golf Marshall Amir Parus, 57, who has been with RCC for 25 years said he would use the training grant to attend courses run by e2i to make a transition to another sector.

Moving forward, e2i will be having two meet-the-workers sessions on 5 and 6 September 2017 to discuss their training needs.

Employability camps, coaching sessions and a job fair for the ex-RCC workers have also been lined up from January to June next year.

Leveraging the Power of the IoT

What is the Internet of Things (IoT) and how will it help to improve and transform businesses? We join union leaders on a journey to the Accenture Internet of Things Centre of Excellence for some insights.

Story and Photo by **Jonathan Tan**



Union leaders from the Singapore Shell Employees' Union and ExxonMobil Singapore Employees Union (EMSEU), together with NTUC Secretary-General (SG) Chan Chun Sing, got to experience firsthand what the future workplace will be like during a visit to the Accenture Internet of Things Centre of Excellence on 21 August 2017.

The centre was launched in 2015 to address the impact of digitalisation through an immersive interactive environment, and stimulate innovation and the exploration of opportunities through the sharing and discussion of ideas.

Making use of a variety of sensors and digital systems in devices as commonplace as mobile phones and tablets, the exhibits showed just how job processes can be made simpler in workplaces such as processing plants. Some of these systems even enable remote surveillance and control, data collection and analytics – all of which play an important role in enabling workers to be more efficient, productive and empower them to make decisions.

TAKEAWAYS

Key takeaways for the union leaders included how such developments could be useful in the areas of personal safety, plant safety and training.

“Such technology is very efficient, enabling us to do more through something as simple as a mobile phone. From a safety aspect, it means that we can minimise risks in the workplace, such as remotely checking on data through the phone instead of physically entering a hazardous area,” shared EMSEU Executive Council Member Tan Swee Kai.

The general secretaries of both SSEU-SHELL and EMSEU shared with SG Chan how the visit has given them new insights to better represent their members in conversations with their companies on workplace changes. The experience will also help them better communicate the importance of training and upgrading to keep pace with such technological changes.

GOOD TO KNOW

Companies keen on transforming themselves through technology and the IoT can consider Accenture's Internet of Things Centre of Excellence. Visit www.accenture.com/sg-en/service-accenture-internet-things-center-excellence-resources for details.



NTUC renames its auditorium after Dr Stephen Riady (middle) who donated \$10 million to the NETF.

NTUC Renames Auditorium

The facility honours Dr Stephen Riady for his support towards the Labour Movement's efforts in enabling workers' continuous education.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

The NTUC Auditorium at One Marina Boulevard will now be known as the Stephen Riady Auditorium @ NTUC.

The renaming of the auditorium was done in appreciation of Dr Stephen Riady, the executive chairman of OUE Limited, who donated \$10 million to the NTUC-Education and Training Fund (NETF) through the Stephen Riady Foundation earlier this year.

Some 100 guests, including Dr Riady, NTUC President Mary Liew and NTUC Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing, were present at the ceremony to unveil the new name for the auditorium on 25 August 2017.

SUPPORT FROM PARTNERS

As additional funding support to NETF, last year's May Day saw the Government pledge to match \$3 for every dollar raised by the Labour Movement, for up to \$150 million.

With Dr Riady's donation, the Labour Movement has achieved the \$100 million funding mark for the NETF – \$25 million raised by NTUC and \$75 million from the Government.

NTUC will continue to reach out to more donors in the coming months as it works towards its target of \$200 million.

The amount raised for the NETF will be used to fund course-fee subsidies aimed at helping workers upgrade and reskill.

Under the Union Training Assistance Programme supported by NETF, union members can tap on more than 3,100 continuing education courses to enjoy subsidies, capped at \$250 a year. U Network members will also be subsidised for selected courses, capped at \$50 per year.

“Everyone can acquire new knowledge and skills through education and continuous learning. I am pleased to support the mission of the NETF to equip the working population in Singapore with relevant skills for the future economy,” said Dr Riady.

SKILLS UPGRADING FOR ALL

In a media release, NTUC said: “The Labour Movement recognises the importance of ensuring sustainable skills upgrading to meet the career aspirations of our working people ... As the economy transforms, the Labour Movement will continue to mobilise and encourage all working people to embrace continuous lifelong learning.”

NTUC is also deepening its collaboration with close to 170 training providers and 14 institutes of higher learning (IHLs). It will work with the IHLs to create “relevant speed-to-market training modules” to prepare workers for a fast-moving economy that requires learning to be continuous and updated.

Labour Movement goes On-Campus



Career guidance and mentorship start early for first-year students in the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) through Young NTUC's Youth Career Network.

By **Jonathan Tan**

Some 500 first-year students will be able to count on the Labour Movement's support in navigating their future careers under a new agreement signed on 22 August 2017 between Young NTUC, SIT and SUSS.

Support offered through Young NTUC's Youth Career Network (YCN) programme include career mentorship, guidance, skills workshops and learning journeys.

The year-long pilot is targeted at students taking the eight degree programmes offered by SUSS and engineering students from SIT. Students will get to interact with career mentors from industries such as social services, finance and healthcare.

"This is a milestone for us because it is the first time we are partnering two very progressive universities in reaching out to students the moment they start their academic career in the schools.

"From Year 1, the students will be plugged into a network of working professionals who are volunteer career mentors. They will complement existing career guides and counsellors in the schools by sharing with students what is needed to succeed in the workplace, help them overcome the different challenges they may encounter, and share the skills needed to succeed," said Young NTUC Executive Secretary Desmond Choo.

GOING UPSTREAM

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, NTUC Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing said: "With this collaboration, every cohort of students can get access to resources in the Labour Movement to help them make better career decisions and find the correct skillsets going forward. We also hope that this will be a lifelong relationship after they graduate and that they will pay it forward by helping to guide the next generation of students. In this way, there will be a lifelong relationship between the students of today, and the workers of tomorrow with the Labour Movement."



Scaling Up the Built Environment Workforce

Training programmes, career fairs and masterclasses are among the initiatives that will take shape through a partnership between e2i, BATU and the Building and Construction Authority.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

The Labour Movement and the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) will work closely together to build the competencies and capabilities of built environment workers and help transform the sector.

To formalise the partnership, NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute), Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union (BATU), and BCA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on 24 August 2017 at the BCA Academy. It was witnessed by NTUC Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing and BCA Chief Executive Hugh Lim.

As part of the collaboration, the partners will organise training programmes, career fairs and masterclasses to support Singaporeans who wish to pursue a career in the sector.

The partnership also aims to strengthen the sector's Singaporean core and ensure existing Singaporean workers' skills are up to date with the changes in technology.

"The industry is fast-moving, and it is crucial for us to equip workers with new capabilities and relevant skillsets while at the same time create good career pathways for those who are keen to pursue a career in the sector," said e2i CEO Gilbert Tan.

BCA will work with e2i to develop a list of courses at BCA Academy that could potentially benefit at least 1,000 Singaporean built environment workers per year. In the next three years, e2i and BCA will also collaborate to organise at least 10 masterclasses.

INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

BCA's Mr Lim called the partnership a major stepping stone for the sector and added that it is important for workers to be equipped with the latest skills and knowledge to support industry transformation.

One of the emerging areas highlighted by the partners at the MOU signing was workers' competency in new technologies such as digital engineering, green building technology, and Design for Manufacturing and Assembly (DfMA). They added that these technologies would enable growth and raise the competitiveness of the workforce and businesses.

NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and BATU Executive Secretary Zainal Sapari added that the union will work with unionised companies and NTUC U Associates to identify skills gaps in the industries and encourage union members to upskill.

Earlier this year, the Committee on the Future Economy identified the built environment sector as one of the 23 sectors that will be going through a transformation. The sector's Industry Transformation Map will be announced in October 2017.

Future Outlook: Start Imagining Today!

What do you get when you embed technology in wearables? Devices that change how we work and live. *Look out for more in this regular column.* By **Fawwaz Baktee**

Sole Power

The construction industry may soon be getting all dressed up with a new pair of boots in town. These sole relievers come with more than just comfort – they feature location trackers, sensors and lights that help with productivity and safety.

According to company SolePower, companies will be able to lower the risk of accidents, track worker-hours and organise job sites with more efficiency.

We like this part – these boots were not only made for walking, they also charge up with every step you take! Yep, sounds like the construction industry is getting

sexy with the Nancy Sinatra and Police mashup in sole care.

Source: www.solepowertech.com



Clarity of Sight

A research institute in Switzerland has recently created a pair of visors that help firefighters see through smoke and debris with the aid of thermal cameras on the lenses.

Much like how the Predator did in the 1987 Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, firefighters will be able to spot and rescue human beings with the help of infrared technology.

Source: www.coolwearable.com



Magic Touch

Slip this device onto your index finger like a ring to turn any blank surface into a touchscreen.

With a Bluetooth connection, BIRD by Israeli tech company MUV Interactive allows you to push, pull, grab, rotate and swipe content from your mobile device or computer projected on a surface such as a wall. It's almost as if you're touching the device itself!

The device integrates with Mac, iOS, Windows and Android and will be rolled out to the world soon. We can't wait to see it in action at the next office presentation!

Source: www.muvinteractive.com



Snapshots

A quick round up of what went on in and around the Labour Movement recently.

Compiled by **NTUC This Week Team**

AUPE: Vision for the Future

The close ties between the public sector and the union that represents its workers has helped the Government to implement many programmes for the common good.

Making the point to some 450 guests at the National Day Dinner organised by the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) was Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Minister-in-charge of the Civil Service Teo Chee Hean.

Also speaking at the event was AUPE General Secretary Yeo Chun Fing who said a key area for the union was to encourage as many workers as possible to upskill themselves for the future and AUPE has been working closely with NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) to do so.

The next challenge for AUPE is leadership renewal, and there is a need to look for individuals who are representative of the changing profile of the workforce.

"Next year our branches are going to hold their Quadrennial General Meetings and you will be electing new branch leaders. I know some of you are going to pass on the baton to younger leaders. And several of you have been trying very hard to find replacements but have not been successful. We should work harder in this area," said Mr Yeo.



Landscape PWM Update

As of July this year, more than 90 per cent of the 3,000 local landscape industry workers in 250 companies have met the training and skills requirement under the landscape Progressive Wage Model (PWM). This figure was released by the National Parks Board (NParks) on 19 August 2017.

Compliance with the landscape PWM is currently a requirement should landscape companies want to be registered under the Landscape Company Register administered by NParks.

NParks also said that it has enhanced its support to landscape companies that have yet to comply with the requirements, including offering flexible training schedules for workers and arranging on-site skills tests for companies with a large number of employees.



Akan Datang: Freelancers Event

NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and U FSE (Freelancers and Self-employed Unit) will be organising the upcoming 'Putting Your Time & Talents to Work' event.

Targeted at Singaporeans, participants will get to meet potential clients to explore opportunities in the 'gig' economy, and gain insights through talks discussing the ins and outs of freelancing with network providers for freelancers such as Grab and CareGiverAsia. Workshops will also be available for those looking for ways to take their skills up a notch.

WHEN AND WHERE?

Make a date for the event on 14 September, from 9am to 5pm, at the Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability.

For more details and registration, visit <https://event.e2i.com.sg/public/webpage/1/748>.

The 12,000-member strong Singapore Teachers' Union (STU) has a new president. He was elected during the STU National Delegates' Conference on 22 July 2017.

Nigel Tan, 35, assumes the position at a time when the teaching profession is addressing challenges of preparing educators for the schools of the future and retaining them in service. He is a head of department in De La Salle School.

NTUC This Week: Tell us how it feels being a young president of a union which takes care of an important sector in Singapore?

Nigel Tan: I joined STU in 2007 and my involvement in activities like the Beginning Teachers' Forum and NTUC's Education Cluster have allowed me to gain greater insights and perspectives of the union's role in the teaching profession. There will be many challenges ahead of me and the learning curve is steep but I am assured by the support I have from fellow unionists to tackle them. I would want to focus a lot on ensuring that the well-being of our educators is taken care of so that they are able to focus on their teaching duties.

What are some challenges facing STU?

STU is concerned with the disruption that requires teachers to be more adaptable to using various teaching methods to engage

students in their learning. Teachers will also need to continuously develop themselves to be future-ready before they can prepare students for future challenges. Teachers also face the arduous challenge of meeting multi-faceted demands from stakeholders like parents and colleagues. This is where teacher-wellness plays a part.

Tell us more about the Teacher Wellness Programme that STU is rolling out.

We are working closely with schools on teacher-wellness. Besides attracting good, talented people into the profession, the challenge is also in retaining teachers who are dedicated. This in turn helps the profession to grow. We do recognise that if teachers' well-being is not taken care of, they will not be able to look into the needs of pupils. STU has, in fact, engaged a wellness consultant who provides counselling services and career coaching to our members. We are also going to schools to provide teacher wellness talks. Most of them often have this stigma about receiving professional help. Our message to teachers is to come forward and seek help without having a feeling that you are being judged.

What motivates you in your union work?

The joy in union work comes from the strong bond among fellow unionists to help our

members in their work. I look forward to ensuring that STU continues to attract and engage its members by staying relevant and representative of all teachers in Singapore. I also hope to promote and maintain good industrial relations between STU and the Education Ministry by providing effective representation.

INSIDER'S
GUIDE

STU

Singapore Teachers' Union

Established: 1946

Why: To champion professionalism and the needs of teachers, provide assistance in dealing with work-related problems and advise on terms and conditions of service.

Membership size: 12,000

Did You Know: The STU has a regular newsletter for its members. It is called *The Mentor*. It started off in May 1971 as a monthly publication. Currently, it is printed every quarter of the year.

FACE 2 FACE
WITH

Nigel
TAN

Story by **Ramesh Subbaraman**

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ANDROID