

COMRADE OF LABOUR (STAR)

Piragasam Munisamy

Assistant General Secretary
Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union

Nominated by the National Trades Union Congress, supported by the NTUC Electronics, Marine and Engineering Cluster and the Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union

Piragasam Munisamy has been a union leader in the Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union (SMEEU) for 27 years since 1996. Brother Piragasam joined the SMEEU executive committee in 1999. He served in various roles as Assistant General Treasurer before becoming Assistant General Secretary in 2017. As a Vice Chairman of the SMEEU Membership Sub-Committee from 2013 to 2017, he provided guidance to ensure union membership grew. In 2017, SMEEU membership hit a high of 17,000 in 2017 despite three years of downturn.

When Schlumberger completed its acquisition of Cameron Singapore in 2016, many union members were worried that their benefits would be removed or reduced. Brother Piragasam and his branch committee members spoke to many employees to hear their concerns. They assured them that the union would safeguard members' welfare and benefits.

At the height of COVID-19 in 2020, when his company was forced to retrench workers, Brother Piragasam fought relentlessly to secure better benefits and rendered timely support for the workers. In 2021, through his leadership and numerous negotiations with the management, the branch committee secured double the goodwill quantum offered to workers who were transferred to another company due to restructuring. He also helped to ensure that their terms and conditions remained the same or better after the transfer.

As a champion of tripartism, Brother Piragasam actively engages with his management partners, strengthening the labour-management relations in Cameron Singapore. His leadership has seen an enhancement of HR policies that benefit members and resolve their employment-related issues and grievances.

He also strongly advocates the partnership between the company and the union on transformation efforts. He played a significant role in forming the Company Training Committee (CTC) between Cameron Singapore and SMEEU to help workers stay relevant. Recognising the importance of leadership renewal, Brother Piragasam also led by example in bringing in and nurturing new branch officials and encouraging them to partake in union and NTUC activities. Beyond upskilling himself, he also proactively took on mentoring roles to support new branch officials and executive committee members.