

**AREU's 1st
General
Convention
Of Delegates**
p6

ntuc this week

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Strong Mandate Gives Labour Movement Fresh Impetus

By **Marcus Lin**
Pictures by **Alvin Toh**

Once in a blue moon, when absolutely necessary, does the need arise for an NTUC Extraordinary Delegates Conference. This blue moon arose on 13 October 2011.

In what NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say describes as “critical to the long term growth and development of the Labour Movement and tripartism in Singapore”, three defining resolutions to set the stage for the NTUC National Delegates’ Conference in December 2011 and underpin the LM 2015 vision were crafted.

SG Lim called on delegates to recognise that “the strength of any resolution is not in the wording; the strength is firstly in the spirit of the resolution and, secondly, in the level of support.”

NTUC President John De Payva urged delegates to give fullest and strongest support “as that would signal clearly to ourselves, to our tripartite partners and to Singaporeans at large our unity and resolve to ensure that the Labour Movement continues to grow from strength to strength for the good of Singapore society.”

The delegates certainly heard them clearly. In a one man/ woman one vote secret ballot, the 367 eligible delegates from more than 600 union delegates and observers present voted overwhelmingly in support of the three resolutions tabled - ensuring sustainable and broadbased real wage increase with productivity gain sharing; enhancing the outreach of the Labour Movement to include PMEs (Professionals, Managers and Executives); and ensuring leadership renewal in the NTUC Central Committee by capping the age limit at 62.

For the record, the three resolutions respectively received 99 per cent, 97 per cent and 88 per cent of the votes cast, outstripping the 81 per cent support received the last time a resolution through secret ballot was held in 1973. Not 100



(From left) NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, NTUC President John De Payva and NTUC Secretary for Financial Affairs Teo Yock Ngee

“ We felt that we should let all delegates express their views. Through this secret ballot, they are free to express their views and with this result it is quite clear that the determination, the unity is very strong.”

NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say

per cent, but definitely not bad by any standards.

SG Lim underlined that the three very strong resolutions “shows the strength of our commitment, the strength of our unity,” and that “we will be in close consultation with tripartite partners to seek common ground to move ahead together.”

Significantly, he added: “With this strength of unity, it gives labour leaders a stronger mandate to engage our tripartite partners. They would know that these three resolutions reflect the very strong determination of the Labour Movement.”

On the other hand, with a weak resolution, SG Lim said the tripartite partners could turn around and say to the Labour Movement: “Look, you have not quite made up your mind. Half your people say do this, half say do that. So, if you yourself are not so sure or determined, why try to convince us?”

“But with 99 per cent, 97 per cent and 88 per cent resolutions, the moral authority is there. This is not something to be taken lightly by the tripartite partners because it reflects the seriousness, the determination, the unity of the Labour Movement in pursuing these three resolutions. So, if you have to say ‘no’ to us, better say ‘no’ with very good reason because we are not going to be easily dissuaded.”

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Construction For The Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability Begins

By **Muneerah Bee Mohamed Iqbal**

The Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability, which is one of the two Continuing Education and Training (CET) centres that is being developed by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), is set to be ready in about two years.

About 200 guests were at the groundbreaking ceremony of the institute which will be managed by NTUC’s e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) on 7 October 2011, including NTUC President John De Payva, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, NTUC Deputy Secretary-General and NTUC’s e2i Chairman Ong Ye Kung and WDA Chief Executive Wong Hong Kuan.

Upon completion, the campus will serve as a gateway to the larger National CET system which currently comprise of 50 CET centres and 500 Approved Training Organisations (ATO).



An artist's impression of the Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability.

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Following the NTUC Extraordinary Delegates' Conference on 13 October 2011, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say fielded questions from the media. Here are some of his responses.



“And the delegates basically expressed our determination and unity to do our very best to reach out to the PMEs and to bring them into the Labour Movement fold so that the Labour Movement will remain relevant to the future workforce of Singapore.”

On whether productivity gain sharing can be legislated:

“I don't want to speculate on what kind of legislation is needed and so on, because not all challenges can be overcome through legislation. As a Labour Movement, we always believe that legislation at best can only specify the minimum that is required of employers.

“Legislation can never require employers to do beyond the minimum. A law can require that you should not hurt or kill people, but the law cannot require that you must love everyone. The same applies to tripartism. We don't believe that every problem can depend on the law, or that gain sharing can depend on the law.

“At the end of the day, we want the tripartite partners to keep doing more not because they have to do the minimum as required by the law but, more importantly, we want the tripartite partnership to keep doing more because there are win-win-win outcomes for all.”

On sustaining real wage growth and productivity improvements:

“Delegates recognise that real wage growth and productivity gains will become more and more challenging if you look at global trends. But we are determined and we are united behind this determination to do our very best as a Labour Movement.

“And at the same time send a strong signal to our tripartite partners that these targets we set ourselves are ambitious, they won't come easy, and therefore it is important that all the tripartite partners give ourselves the strongest partnership possible as we move ahead.

“So, the 99 per cent support from the delegates is a strong reflection of our determination in pursuing this broadbased real wage increase in a sustainable manner over the next five to 10 years.”

On ageing and keeping the Labour Movement alive

“A person has a limited lifespan. We may live to 70, 80, 90 or whatever but it is a limited lifespan. But we must strive for a Labour Movement that is able to survive for a long, long time, for many more generations to come.

“The passing of this resolution is a major milestone for the Labour Movement because it expresses the collective commitment and determination to ensure that the labour leadership will not age to the extent whereby one day it will become either ineffective, irrelevant, or disconnected from the changing profile of the workforce.

“In other words, the labour leaders are putting the long term survival of the Labour Movement way ahead, well above their own desires to continue to serve as labour leaders.”

On the rising number of PMEs

“The delegates recognise that the profile of the workforce is changing fast. Today, the number of PMEs versus rank-and-file workers is about 50-50. Looking ahead to the future, we can expect the PMEs to form the majority of the workforce of the future.

On whether an all collar union can better serve PMEs

“How we make it happen is less of a concern. What we today need is for the tripartite partners to agree on what should happen. Just like in the early days when we deliberated on re-employment, once we agreed on what should happen we can amend the law, we can amend anything else to make it happen...

“... what is important is can we reach consensus on what should happen in the next five, ten years so that as a tripartite partnership we can serve the PMEs better, we can meet their aspirations better. That is the next step. Let us focus on the what, and later once the what is in place, the how will happen logically.”

On the importance of rank-and-file workers

“As we step up focus on the PMEs, we will not do so at the expense of our focus on rank-and-file workers. Rank-and-file workers will continue to receive very strong focus and support from the Labour Movement, and at the same time we will step up focus on the PMEs. So it is not choosing between one or the other.”



Before reading the three resolutions to the delegates at the NTUC Extraordinary Delegates' Conference on 13 October 2011, NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How explained how they came about:

“At the Pre-National Delegates' Conference in September, the participants discussed, deliberated and agreed that for the Labour Movement to have a strong future and to be relevant to our society it is important that we focus on three areas... and at the close of that conference, the Pre-NDC participants proposed that these points of agreement be endorsed by our delegates through resolutions and that is the reason why we are all gathered here this morning.”

DSG Heng said following the Pre-NDC, draft resolutions were worked out and there was another gathering of top three leaders from the unions when drafts were shown and discussed; inputs and advice were sought, given and taken on board; and the resolutions were refined accordingly.

“So this morning we bring to you the resolutions for your consideration and support.”



RESOLUTION (I)

This Extraordinary Delegates' Conference notes that as outlined by the Economic Strategies Committee's report, Singapore's next phase of growth must be both sustainable and inclusive so as to drive a broad-based increase in living standards for all citizens;

REAFFIRMS THAT sustainable and inclusive growth must be productivity-led, involving all workers, resulting in broad-based real wage increase; and

RESOLVES THAT management must take the lead to improve productivity and that unions must rally workers to upgrade existing skills and/or acquire new skills, adapt to new technology, tools and equipment to improve the way work is done, and that unions and management must ensure that the gains achieved from higher productivity are fairly shared with workers through better wages and better jobs.

RESOLUTION (II)

This Extraordinary Delegates' Conference recognises that the strength of the Labour Movement lies in a strong and growing membership representing workers of all collars, ages and nationalities; and

RESOLVES THAT the Labour Movement must constantly define new membership strategies in response to the changing profile of the workforce and enhance outreach to expand the scope of representation beyond the existing base to include the growing community of professionals, managers and executives.

RESOLUTION (III)

This Extraordinary Delegates' Conference notes that affiliates of the NTUC recognise the importance of leadership induction, development and renewal through the 3-Flow (Flow-In, Flow-Up and Flow-On) approach;

REAFFIRMS the desire of the Central Committee to lead by example at the highest level of the Labour Movement; and

RESOLVES THAT notwithstanding any provision in the Constitution of the NTUC, no delegate/member shall be eligible to stand for election or be appointed as a member of the Central Committee of the NTUC if the delegate/member has reached the statutory retirement age at the time of the election. In addition, any Central Committee member who reaches the statutory retirement age at any time after the election but before the completion of the full term of office shall cease to be a member of the Central Committee as of that date.



Chief scrutineer Nachiappan RK Sinniah reads out the voting results.



10,000 Gifts From The Heart In The Past 5 Years

By **Muneerah Bee Mohamed Iqbal**

It has been five years and Gift From The Heart has established itself as an embodiment of the Most Caring Labour Movement. About 10,000 gift bags have been distributed since the initiative was started five years ago and it continues to bring some relief to low income workers and families this year.

On 24 September 2011, 2,000 Chemical Industries Employees' Union (CIEU) and the Food, Drinks and Allied Workers' Union (FDAWU) members gathered at Downtown East to receive packages containing essential groceries and household supplies (pictured below) to help defray their cost of living. Each bag contains 26 items donated from 17



companies. NTUC FairPrice Foundation and Lee Foundation also contributed to the event in terms of monetary sponsorship.

The event was also made possible with the help of more than 30 volunteers, which include Executive Committee members, branch officials and a few union members, who packed and distributed the items in an orderly manner.

Guest-of-Honour NTUC Deputy Secretary-General and FDAWU Executive Secretary Heng Chee How applauded their hard work and dedication in making the event a success.

The sustainability of Gift from the Heart over the years has allowed union members such as first time recipient Susila Dawi Velu, 43, to benefit from the programme. Madam Susila, who works at Riverview Hotel, is the sole breadwinner for her family as her husband is visually-impaired. Her 19-year-old daughter is currently taking care of him while her 16-year-old son is still in school and taking on part-time work at the same time.

Holding back her tears, she expressed



FDAWU General Secretary Tan Hock Soon (left), NTUC Deputy Secretary General and FDAWU Executive Secretary Heng Chee How (second from left), CIEU President Rajendran Govindarajoo (right) with a family receiving their Gift from the Heart items.

“For us, in the union movement, we want to do things that are useful for our members. We want to care for our members in ways that are meaningful and practical for you.”

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General and FDAWU Executive Secretary Heng Chee How

gratitude for the help that FDAWU has provided. “With Gift From The Heart, it will be easier for me for this month because it helps me with my kitchen things for my family. Thank you very much for all the help,” she said.

Cracking Minds In Unity To Boost Membership

By **Naseema Banu Maideen**

Role-playing and team-building activities centred on boosting membership were the order of the day for some 60 young branch officials of United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries (UWEEI) on 22 September 2011.

“What are some ways to attract more Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs) to join the union?”, “How do we boost sign ups for our interest groups’ activities?”, “How do we persuade members who are retrenched from companies to stay on as members and benefit from the Labour Movement?” - These were the common challenges that were thrown to the table as the branch officials discussed and brainstormed at the third session of the UWEEI Young Branch Officials Leadership Development Programme.

Young UWEEI developed a framework for the training and development of young branch officials below the age of 40 years through the creation of a Young Branch Officials (BOs) Leadership Development Programme. This is a year-long programme with four quarterly engagement sessions with the branch officials.

This series is part of ongoing efforts by the union in encouraging ‘flow-in’ and ‘flow-up’ on leadership retention within the union. These sessions have also served as platforms to identify promising youth leaders who exhibit the potential to be honed for enhanced leadership capabilities.



Young branch officials from various branches of United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries (UWEEI) came together to share and brainstorm on challenges revolving round membership.

Said Mr Yaw Boon Seng, 40, a Senior Engineer and Branch Treasurer with Flextronics Manufacturing Singapore Private Limited: “Basically, this session has given a space for us to share our challenges that we face in dealing with membership. It is a good learning platform as we have been exposed to the available programmes for PMEs and how they can benefit with the union. There are also training opportunities that I have not been aware of which I can now go back and share with our existing and potential members.”

The young branch officials who came from various branches also networked and bonded over the day-long session. They were updated with the latest membership benefits through a sharing session with NTUC’s Membership department.

Said Ms Masturah Mohd Hasan, 40, a Project Secretary and Assistant Branch Secretary with Yokogawa Electric Asia Private Limited: “We have learned of ways to bring up the membership number. There are many new partnering merchants and retail outlets that NTUC members can enjoy privileges with now. I was not aware of this before; now, this will be one of my tactics for luring new members in. There is also a big pool of engineers who can still be encouraged to join us with the membership benefits and training courses they can tap on.”

The fourth session in this leadership series will be held towards the end of this year.

“Our focus on this third run of the series is on membership as it is something that involves the life and survival of the union. Building up membership is one important target that we should work on with the youths as they may have more refreshing ideas on how they deal with daily membership issues. This is also a platform for identifying new leaders as in the future we will have to count on them to come forward and serve.”

Young UWEEI Chairman Jason Lee

Devan Nair Institute Gets Underway

New All Inclusive Institute Will Serve Workers Better



From left: Mr Muhammad Shafiq Bin Mohd Tahir, Madam Mary Ang, Madam K. Ratha, Madam Siow Seow Fong and Mr Hareenderpal Singh respectively represent NTUC's Worker Centric Departments - Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs), Mature Workers, Back-to-Work Women, Low Wage Workers and Youths.

By **Muneerah Bee Mohamed Iqbal**

Pictures by **Alvin Toh**

The groundbreaking ceremony of the Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability on 7 October 2011 saw five Guests-of-Honour who embody the five different groups of workers the Labour Movement serves - Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs), Low Wage Workers, Back-to-Work Women, Mature Workers and Youths.

Located in the Jurong Lake District and slated to open by the end of 2013, NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) has been appointed to manage this National Continuing Education and Training (CET) Campus West.

The seven-storey institute will be a place for workers to upgrade their skills, employers to fulfil their manpower needs and training providers to synergise to deliver training. NTUC's Worker Centric Departments will also be housed here to offer holistic solutions and service to all workers. The campus can train up to 50,000 workers annually to develop sectoral skills such as digital animation, media, early childhood care and education, healthcare, human resource, landscape and Workplace Safety & Health, as well as generic skills such as employability skills, service excellence, generic manufacturing and productivity.

An animator with Tiny Island Production Private Limited, Muhammad Shafiq Bin Mohd Tahir, 25, hopes the campus will offer more courses related to his industry. He sees upgrading as an opportunity to improve his skills

and prospects. He explained: "It's a competitive industry even though it's new and right now there are more people who are interested in it. I think if you don't upgrade, you're going to get left behind, so it's very important to get upgraded."

Besides training services, workers can have easy access to career services and career consultants will advise adult learners on jobs and career pathways, as well as match them to employers who are hiring. Employers can also work with the Career Services Centre to identify relevant training for their employees and recruit job ready candidates.

The Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability is named after a founding member of NTUC and former President of Singapore, the late Mr C V Devan Nair, who was also NTUC Secretary-General from 1963 to 1965 and from 1970 to 1979. Mr Devan Nair's son Janadas Devan (pictured, in red tie) was present at the ceremony, alongside NTUC President John De Payva (pictured, in white shirt and brown pants), NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say (pictured, in white shirt and black pants) Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) Chief Executive Wong Hong Kuan and 200 guests comprising of union leaders, workers, training providers, tripartite partners and staff.

“Throughout our journey, we will encounter numerous obstacles and challenges, but with strong desire and passion we will overcome them nonetheless. NTUC's e2i and Worker Centric Departments, we are honoured to be housed in this institute named after Mr Devan Nair... We will emulate Mr Devan Nair's spirit and the many other brothers and sisters who led the NTUC throughout its history, as we do our part for workers of Singapore.”

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General and NTUC's e2i Chairman Ong Ye Kung (pictured below, in purple shirt)



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AREU Holds Inaugural General Convention Of Delegates

By **Gwen Sin**

It was another significant milestone for the Attractions, Resorts & Entertainment Union (AREU) as it held its inaugural General Convention of Delegates and first election of its Executive Council at the Jewel Box, Mount Faber, on 10 October 2011.

Formed through the restructuring of NTUC Club Staff Union (NCSU) from a house union to an industry union, AREU has made many remarkable achievements. The process of restructuring was a challenging but necessary one, so that the Labour Movement could also represent the growing workforce in the leisure industry.

Especially with the emergence of the two integrated resorts, namely Resorts World Sentosa (RWS) and Marina Bay Sands (MBS), the turf of AREU expanded to represent employees in the attractions, entertainment, lifestyle services, arts and cultural activities, wildlife, resorts and related services. With just 900 members then, a Protem Committee was quickly set up chaired by then NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Halimah Yacob. Also onboard to put the pieces together were NTUC President John De Payva, as well as NTUC Central Committee member Lim Kuang Beng as advisors.

The dedication and commitment from AREU's exco leaders led by AREU's President Abdullah Bin Abdul Talib and General Secretary Charles Khng resulted in a successful restructuring. At the same time, AREU worked towards developing a healthier leadership

“It is important that AREU will continue to work with management partners and other stakeholders to be pro-worker and pro-business. We are pro-worker, because they are our members whom we serve. We are also pro-business, because workers will not be able to benefit if businesses are not doing well. Likewise, the management must demonstrate to the union that workers must be well and fairly treated and motivated to contribute their best for the good of businesses to do well. This balanced approach is a display of how NTUC functions differently from other unions around the world.”

AREU Advisor and NTUC Deputy-Secretary Ong Ye Kung



AREU Exco leaders launch the AREU website with Guest-of-Honour NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Ong Ye Kung (center) and special guest NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say (second from right)

pipeline and amended their constitution to have leadership renewal in place at all levels of leadership, being one of the first unions to do so.

With further assistance by AREU's Advisor and NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Ong Ye Kung, AREU's membership expanded to include RWS which agreed to sponsor membership subscription of their rank-and-file workers as part of its staff benefits' enhancement. This arrangement shot up AREU's membership by a few thousands. AREU and RWS also inked a memorandum of agreement on 8 March 2011 to build strong Labour-Management Relationship; enhancing employees' well-being and strengthen its competitiveness.

As part of the Labour Movement's network, unions like the Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union (SISEU) and Food, Drinks and Allied Workers' Union (FDAWU) also extended their support by contributing branches related to the industries associated with AREU. Till date, AREU's membership swelled to 6,900 members with 18 branches. To further boost its membership, AREU is already exploring ways to recruit and organise employees from MBS.

AREU also took the opportunity to launch its website, www.areu.org.sg, during the General Convention of Delegates graced by Guest-of-Honour DSG Ong and special guest NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say in the presence of AREU union leaders, NTUC Central Committee members, management partners, representatives from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF) and other distinguished guests.

In addition, the union unveiled its vision: to be a key strategic partner with its stakeholders,

and achieve better and more meaningful lives for its workers. Its mission was also launched - to instil Advocacy and be a constructive voice for workers; to constantly Reach out to engage and strengthen relationships with its stakeholders; to achieve Excellence as a well-run union with strong membership and competent leadership, and to create Unique experience in serving its members wholeheartedly and going the extra mile for them.



ATTRACTIONS, RESORTS & ENTERTAINMENT UNION

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE (2011 - 2015)

President	Hassan Bin Abdullah
Vice President	Carroll Vernon Cedric
General Secretary	Charles Khng Joo Hock
Asst General Secretary	Roslee Bin Mustaffa
Executive Secretary	Joanne Cham Hui Fong
General Treasurer	Goh Liang Choon, Henry
Asst General Treasurer	Mohamed Riaz s/o Mohamed Omar
Council Members	Evelyn Goh Lee Cheng Azmi Mahmood Bin Razali Chan Peng Yew Raymond Azmi Bin Ibrahim Clement Edward Jaswan Andrew Wang Wey Shian Joseph Kelly Ferdinands Siti Mas Ayu Binte Jamil Tony Lim

AREU President Abdullah Receives AREU Excellence Award

AREU President Abdullah Bin Abdul Talib has decided not to stand for elections in the new term of AREU's Executive Council held on 10 October 2011, and is graciously stepping aside to make way for younger blood.

Mr Abdullah has contributed significantly with diverse roles within the Labour Movement, such as taking on the responsibility of the President's role of the former NTUC Club Staff Union, as well as playing a pivotal role in the restructuring of AREU. He was instrumental in explaining to members the purpose of the change and gathering support for it to take place. This resulted in a strong mandate from the members to form AREU in 2010.

As a strong believer in leadership renewal and leadership development, many have gained much from his guidance and have grown to be better union leaders over the years. He also spends time to induct new leaders by identifying and encouraging potential ones to serve. They have shared his passion and commitment, which have left a deep impression on them and is one of the key reasons they decided to be a union leader.

In recognition of his efforts, AREU has introduced an inaugural award to recognise AREU union leaders for their significant contributions to AREU with Mr Abdullah being made the first recipient of this award for being an exemplary example within AREU and the Labour Movement. AREU will also continue to stay connected with him, invite him for future activities and tap on his vast experience.



AREU President Abdullah Bin Abdul Talib (right) receives the AREU Excellence Award from NTUC DSG Ong Ye Kung.

I would like to express appreciation to NTUC for their guidance through AREU's restructuring; to the contributing unions like SISEU, SMMWU and FDAWU for extending their support to expedite its growth; to management partners, tripartite partners such as the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF), as well as union leaders who recently joined AREU for their commitment in working hand in hand with AREU."

**Outgoing AREU President
Abdullah Bin Abdul Talib**

Brother Abdullah Bin Abdul Talib is a veteran union leader, having been actively involved in union work for 33 years dating back to the days when he first joined the Pioneer Industries Employees' Union (PIEU) in 1978. Over the years, he has held many other positions in various boards, committees and councils.

His significant knowledge and expertise in industrial relations resulted in his illustrious union career which includes being a member of the National Wages Council, sitting on the Board of Directors of Denticare, Board of Directors of NTUC Sentosa Beach Resort, Member of the Asia-Pacific Regional Committee, International Federation of Building & Woodworker (IFBWW, Geneva), Executive Committee Member of SUN, as well as many more roles over the years.

His ability to resolve industrial disputes at the lowest level distinguishes him as an effective union leader in achieving win-win outcomes. AREU is pleased to present to Brother Abdullah the inaugural AREU Excellence Award in recognition of his invaluable contribution to AREU."

Excerpts from the AREU General Secretary Charles Khng's citation

New UPAGE-City Gas CA Gives Longer Working Life

By **Nur Azarudin Putra Mohamed Jufri**

Principal Industrial Relations Officer, Union of Power and Gas Employees

3 October 2011 marked another successful completion of a new Collective Agreement (CA) between the Union of Power and Gas Employees (UPAGE) and City Gas Private Limited. Both parties agreed to revise the salary structure upwards by at least four per cent, enhance the bonus matrix, as well as increase the cap for outpatient medical coverage.

The new CA also removed the 10 per cent cut when the worker reaches 60 years old. With a refinement of the re-employment policy, workers can work till 65 and beyond. This would encourage older workers to remain in the workforce.

UPAGE Deputy General Secretary and City Gas Branch Chairman Madam Suseela A Singaram (pictured, second from left) noted: "The union engaged in some robust discussions with the management. Many issues were discussed at length and eventually we had reached an outcome which UPAGE believes is in the best interest of all our members."

City Gas President and Chief Executive Officer Ng Yong Hwee (pictured, fourth from



City Gas Private Limited

right) said that although a longer time was required for both parties to come to a final agreement, the consensus that they arrived at is a mutual win-win-win for City Gas, staff and UPAGE. He said: "I would like to thank UPAGE for their continued understanding and forthcoming support. I hope to see a lot more of City Gas-UPAGE collaborative engagements being sown to cross-pollinate ideas and initiatives towards enhancing our people's readiness for future challenges, maintaining our competitive edge and ensuring continued employability in order to help the company's sustainable growth as well as to safeguard the quality of living for our families and community."

The company also gave a one-off payment

of \$450 to be given to all union members covered under the CA. Madam Suseela said: "Our bargainable workforce is almost 100 per cent unionised and the one-off payment recognised the benefits and roles of the union in City Gas. In support of NTUC's push for PMEs (Professionals, Managers and Executives) breakthrough in membership, the branch is also working to get all executives to sign up as union members to enjoy many benefits in areas of Work, Live and Play."

Moving ahead, the union is looking to work with management to make City Gas more competitive and to improve productivity, which will lead to a more sustainable real wage increase over time.

MIWU's 30 Years Of High Notes

By Gwen Sin

The Metal Industries Workers' Union (MIWU) concluded its 30th anniversary celebrations with much blast and pomp at The Ritz Carlton, Millenia Singapore, on 7 October 2011.

Attended by 820 members, past MIWU leaders and staff, NTUC Central Committee members, tripartite partners as well as many friends of MIWU, it was a good finale round-up of MIWU's achievements over the past thirty years. Guests were entertained by an opening salsa performance by MIWU Exco members and their spouses, followed by a poignant nostalgic flashback of the union since its establishment in 1981 as well as a regular annual item by Young MIWU, amid table game activities for all to participate and bond with one another.

“ Together as a union, we have made tremendous progress in a span of 30 years. When we started as a young union, the majority of our members were young and filled with aspirations. Looking back, I too started off as a young member of the Executive Committee of MIWU. Over the years, we have stuck together through thick and thin, growing our membership by rallying the workers of the manufacturing sector in Singapore. I hope that MIWU can continue to grow in strength in the years to come.”

MIWU Organising Committee Chairman and President Toh Hock Poh

MIWU Council of Advisors Chairman Lim Boon Heng was present to grace the event. Other distinguished guests included NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How and MIWU Advisor Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts & Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources Ms Grace Fu.

The celebrative mood was indeed soaring on many high notes throughout the evening. As part of the gala dinner's highlights, a time capsule containing 30 years of MIWU's memories was sealed by Mr Lim, MIWU President Toh Hock Poh, General Secretary Tan Chai Kun and Executive Secretary Jessie Yeo. A commemorative 112-page book, 'MIWU 30', was also launched. It was filled with MIWU's significant milestones during different stages of the past thirty years, highlighting the union's ups and downs in colourful yet succinct details.

Clearly, MIWU has not failed to 'Make Impressions, Walk United', in line with its tagline for this year's anniversary celebrations, by the mark of its 30 years in making history within the Labour Movement. It was a time of jubilation, as well as a time of reflection, noted Mr Lim in his opening address. Drawing lessons from MIWU's past experiences in restructuring the union, factors resulting from changes in business cycles to competition from emerging countries, Mr Lim



MIWU's 30th anniversary celebrations had many high notes. Mr Lim Boon Heng (middle, in black jacket) was the Guest-of-Honour for the evening. NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How and MIWU Advisor Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts & Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources Ms Grace Fu were also present to grace the event.

“ Yes, we have come a long way. But we must also acknowledge the changes in society. Our lifestyles have changed. Old coffeeshop talk is being replaced by social media chats and tweets. To keep the union relevant in this new environment, we have to add these new platforms to our array of channels to keep in touch with members and retain the sense of community, the sense of solidarity.”

MIWU Council of Advisors Chairman Lim Boon Heng

urged all with three pointers of advice: live within financial means; save for a rainy day; and also the need to constantly upgrade and learn new skills to be prepared for any pending crises.

With more challenges ahead, MIWU's finale celebrations had definitely strengthened the concerted spirit felt during the gala dinner with an indelible impact on all who have gone through the journey with MIWU hand-in-hand, past and present.

FairPrice Walk For Rice Gets A Three-Leg Start

NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Limited's Walk for Rice campaign is back for a third time. Once again, it ties up with the South East Community Development Council (CDC) with the objective of raising half a million bowls of rice for 7,000 needy families living in the South East district.

For every 100m of walking completed, Fairprice will donate one bowl of rice to the needy. This year's launch event for the NTUC Fairprice Walk for Rice @ South East 2011 charity campaign on 2 October 2011 saw Guest-of-Honour Minister of State for National Development and Trade & Industry Lee Yi Shyan and Fairprice Chief Executive Officer (Singapore) Seah Kian Peng raise the first eight bowls of rice by completing a three-legged walk around Bedok Stadium.

“The community has been very supportive of this campaign over the years and we are proud to partner South East CDC in continuing with this initiative. We will bring together our staff, our customers, and our business

partners as one united community to help provide rice to needy families,” said Mr Seah.

Joining them were over 700 participants from Fairprice and South East CDC as well as students from Nanyang Polytechnic's School of Business Management, staff and families from Alcatel-Lucent, young athletes from Geylang United Football Club and Team South East brisk walkers. Altogether, about 2,800 bowls of rice were raised.

To date, Fairprice has donated one million bowls to this initiative and benefited some 14,000 needy families over the last two years. It will continue to support this initiative for the next two years.



Fairprice CEO (Singapore) Seah Kian Peng (front row, left) and MOS for National Development and Trade & Industry Lee Yi Shyan (front row, right) raised the first eight bowls of rice with a three-legged walk around Bedok Stadium.

How You Can Participate

Purchase participating products from all FairPrice stores between 6 to 19 October 2011 (refer to print advertisements or in-store advertisements for more details).

Let's Hear It For The Children

In September and October 2011, Children's Day celebrations took centre stage at My First Skool's Community Partnership Programmes. Here are some of the highlights.

Creating The Best Learning Experiences

Parents have come to recognise that the My First Skool (MFS) brand of preschool centres, managed by NTUC First Campus Co-operative Limited, have been delivering quality early education to young children. This explains why two new centres, namely MFS at Block 269 Compassvale Link and MFS at Block 106 Henderson Crescent have reported impressive take up rates of over 92 per cent and over 88 per cent respectively.

Both centres also took their community engagement up a notch with the launch of the Community Partnership Programme (CPP) in conjunction with their Children's Day Celebrations.

As part of the CPP, MFS Compassvale Link Acting Principal Anitha Letchumanansamy announced at their celebrations on 30 September 2011 that Guest-of-Honour Member of Parliament for Pasir Ris-Punggol Gan Thiam Poh will serve as the school's Honorary Education Advisor to add value to the centre's educational needs.

"With Pasir Ris-Punggol constituency bringing valuable knowledge on the needs of the community, we enable our children to enjoy greater access to a variety of resources in the centre's vicinity. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Thiam Poh for accepting our invitation to partner us in our efforts to deliver high quality programmes and services to the children here," she said.

The event at MFS Henderson Crescent on 1 October 2011 also marked the centre's official opening and the Henderson Crescent Residents' Committee's Family Day celebrations. It was graced by Member of Parliament for Tanjong Pagar GRC Indranee Rajah.

Both Ms Anitha and MFS Henderson Crescent Principal Christina Han acknowledged that the development of the children is also greatly benefited by working with the parents to "ensure continuity for children's learning". As such, the centres have already planned a series of activities for the rest of the year which they hope will see strong parental participation.



Tanjong Pagar GRC MP Indranee Rajah (in blue dress) with the children and staff of MFS Henderson Crescent.

MFS Yew Tee Students Start A Community Garden



Chua Chu Kang GRC MP Alex Yam bonding with the children of My First Skool Yew Tee.

The Yew Tee Community Garden, jointly managed by the My First Skool (MFS) at Block 602 Chua Chu Kang Street 62 and the Yew Tee Zone 7 Residents' Committee, was officially opened by Member of Parliament for Chua Chu Kang GRC Mr Alex Yam on 18 September 2011.

The Kindergarten 1 children from MFS arrived eagerly with their parents for the opening very early that morning. Mr Yam promptly arrived at 9am and was hosted by Teacher Yasmin Sani who was also the teacher in charge of the garden.

After the official opening of the garden, the children and teachers walked Mr Yam through the garden, explaining the kinds of plants they have planted such as Hibiscus, Aloe Vera, Pandan, Lemongrass and Lime. She also explained how it was related to the centre's curriculum based on the theme: The Food Pyramid - Plants.

The children also gave a mini performance by singing 'Heal The World' by the late Michael Jackson. Everyone enjoyed the performance and Mr Yam was impressed by the confidence level of the children.

Thereafter, Mr Yam took a tour of the Kindergarten 2, Kindergarten 1 and Nursery classrooms. He was pleased that the children were exposed to nature and hoped to see more of such efforts by teachers to enhance the children's learning.

A Meaningful Celebration

The Multi-Racial Block Party and Children's Day Celebration jointly organised by My First Skool (MFS) at Serangoon North Avenue 2 and the Braddell Heights Zone 'F' Residents' Committee and Children's Club on 1 October 2011 saw the Kindergarten 1 and Nursery preschoolers have a whale of a time. In addition to celebrating the occasion in a fun and meaningful way, the children also got to put up a special performance for Guest-of-Honour Member of Parliament for Marine Parade GRC Seah Kian Peng.



Marine Parade GRC MP Seah Kian Peng gets up close and personal with the little ones of MFS Serangoon North Avenue 2.

Eldercare Benefits From MCYS Help

By **Vanessa Teo**

Pictures contributed by

NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Limited

The financial help that the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) has extended to elderly day care centres and home help services indeed brought about great news to families with elderly at home. In addition, news that MCYS would also raise the government share of funding for Senior Activity Centres, bringing up the total funding support for community based eldercare services to \$13 million, also doubled the joy.

Speaking at a visit to the Henderson Senior Citizens' Home on 7 October 2011, Acting Minister for MCYS and Minister Of State (Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts) Chan Chun Sing acknowledged the move to develop the community care sector.

Said MG (NS) Chan: "What we want to evolve is also something in the middle, what we call community care, and that is what you see here today. That means there is a whole spectrum of services delivery models, from home care, community care to institutional care. So as we go forward, community care is also one of the ways that use the resources a bit more efficiently, especially for people like therapists, doctors and



MG (NS) Chan Chun Sing shares in the joy of the elderly in one of their favourite activities.

nurses, and even the social workers.

"So we want to encourage a greater development in the community care sector. Today, the effort you see that we have done for the two measures we are putting in place is a small step in that direction to evolve the community care sector..."

This move was definitely much welcomed by NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Limited and its General Manager Lim Sia Hoe was one who was pleased with the announcement. She said: "I am pretty happy with this announcement. We are now currently taking care of not only the lower income but also the sandwiched class... This increased tier will definitely benefit them... just for day care alone from our side, at least 10 per cent of my current elderly will benefit from this."

94-year-old Annie Tan is one who has stayed with Henderson Senior Citizens' Home for 13

years and is one happy resident who finds comfort in the conducive environment there. She too looks forward to the visits from NTUC Eldercare staff every now and then.

"Over here, I don't feel that I am alone. I get some friendship support. And even if you have thousands of dollars, it does not equate to the emotional support you can find here," shared Madam Tan. And with the new funding, NTUC Eldercare also hopes to bring in more professional staff to bring about better care for the elderly like Madam Tan.

Shared Ms Lim: "What we really need is to see how to bring in more people. With the money, I can actually bring in more people to service the elderly. Today it's not just only an extra pair of hands; we are talking about professional services, but at an affordable rate and giving basically the right care."



Madam Annie Tan (left) proudly shows her family portrait to MG (NS) Chan Chung Sing (right) during a house visit.

Study Trip To URA Benefits Unionists

By **Joshua Joseph**

It was indeed an insightful learning experience when some 46 union members consisting of union leaders and branch officials embarked on a study trip on 4 October 2011 to the Singapore City Gallery at the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) centre, as they learned more on the nation's development plans as well as to better understand its remarkable physical transformation in the past, present and future.

The trip jointly organised by Ong Teng Cheong Labour Leadership Institute (OTCi) and the OTCi Alumni featured 10 thematic areas and more than 50 audiovisual and interactive exhibits spanning three floors over 2,400 square metres. The Gallery also offered an exciting, multi-sensory learning experience into Singapore's planning journey. Through the trip, union members were better equipped with information on the trade-offs to meet the needs of the city-state with limited land.

Present at the event was Singapore Urban Redevelopment Authority Workers' Union President Freddy Lim who shared: "I think visiting the City Gallery as part of the study trip is useful for the union leaders for a few reasons. One is that first of all as a citizen, they will be able to understand better how our island city is made. Such a small island, with our land's scarce resources, we are able to optimise and plan our land use to be able to benefit every



strata of society... whatever we do here will impact their lives somehow.

"The other thing is of course it broadens our horizon, and as a unionist it will be helpful for us to communicate with our people, our members, that we are very fortunate because we've got good people in government, we have got good planners, we have got good quality public service and we are able to bring about such a change that we can be proud of and therefore they can aspire to be someone who can contribute to the progress of the country.

"I think study trips like this is good for union leaders as a connecting point. They can go together where they can learn different aspects of working life. I think this should be one stop that unionists should not miss out on.. it will benefit them, because we are turning plans to reality. What we put on paper, we realise them in our everyday living so this is something that will impact on their lives."

Also finding the trip a beneficial one was



“They actually get the chance to know how our Singapore's URA is doing things and how and why we are doing this... so it's a good eye-opener and a good learning trip for us. I'm very grateful that (with) NTUC being in the leadership grouping, many leaders get this opportunity.”

OTCi Alumni President Karthikeyan Krishnamurthy

Union of Power and Gas Employees (UPAGE) Executive Council member Kathy Foo who said: "I actually learned a lot. I am glad that the URA shared with us their vision to turn this small little red dot to such a vibrant city and how they make full use and maximise the land because land is very scarce in Singapore. So they really fully maximise the building... I am very glad to hear all this. Actually it's good for all union members to know the direction of our country so I urge all union members to come forward and pay this place a visit. All of us learned a lot from this trip."

UCCW Aims To Impact Another 20,000 This Year

By **Naseema Banu Maideen**

They may be willing to learn but be unaware of where to start. They may be exploited by irresponsible employers and yet be suffering in silence. This is the common plight of the vulnerable group of contract and casual workers in Singapore. The Labour Movement's Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) has been a pillar of support for these workers by helping them to overcome these challenges.

Last year, the unit reached out to 20,000 workers; this year, the unit aims to reach out to another 20,000 in this group through a spread of programmes, shared UCCW Director Zainal Sapari. One of the key programmes is the 'Better Skills, Better Future' seminar which is designed to educate workers on their employment rights, training opportunities, statutory entitlements and other essential information that they may not be aware of.

The first run of this seminar kicked off with a session in the Malay language on 2 October 2011 at NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute). The session saw 100 participants attending for the event; and at least half of the workers who turned up for the session had their first exposure to UCCW.

Said Madam Masnisah Mohamed, 47, a part-time service staff at a McDonald's restaurant outlet: "I read about UCCW's seminar today from the newspaper. What I am most interested about is finding out about how I



NTUC's Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) aims to touch the lives of another 20,000 workers through its outreach programmes this year.

can attend new courses. At my age, I can still continue learning and I want to take up courses that can help me brush up on customer service."

Madam Rosmini Mohd Hashim, 43, a part-time sorter at Singapore Post Private Limited was another participant at the seminar. "I have already earlier heard about NTUC's e2i and have also attended a training course at NTUC LearningHub Private Limited. I hope to be able to benefit even further with UCCW's programmes. It also helps that this session is held in Malay as we can better understand the information shared," she said.

A roadshow themed 'For A Better Future' was held before the series of seminars kicked off in October this year. The roadshow on 17 September 2011 saw some 2,000 workers gathered at the open field beside White Sands Shopping Mall in Pasir Ris. It was customised to educate these contract and casual workers on the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) and

Workfare Training Support (WTS) schemes. It also encouraged workers to embark on training and skills upgrading to enjoy a pie of the economy's inclusive growth. These messages were brought to the workers in a light-hearted manner through 'getai' entertainment.

These are some programmes tailored to improve the lives of these workers. Mr Zainal further shared that statistics highlighted that there are 400,000 WIS recipients. He said UCCW "will work towards capturing many of these 400,000 workers by working closely with our partners."

UCCW works closely with partners such as the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and Central Provident Fund (CPF) Board. The 'Better Skills, Better Future' seminar was held in the Tamil language on 9 October 2011 and the Mandarin session will be held on 30 October. Contract and casual workers who are interested in attending the session can call 6473 4295 for registration.

“ We have been more aggressive this year in terms of reaching out to contract and casual workers. We have expanded our seminars' awareness through the radio and newspapers to tap on workers who have not been introduced to UCCW as yet. We will continue to sustain our efforts in reaching out to the casual and contract workers.”

NTUC Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) Director Zainal Sapari

Jazzing It Up For Young NTUC Members

By **Vanessa Teo**

Young NTUC members had the opportunity to get in tune with their jazzy feats all thanks to the collaboration

between Young NTUC and the National University of Singapore (NUS) Centre For the Arts (CFA). As part of their collective efforts to help youths fulfill their dreams, Young NTUC members have gained from this partnership and got to attend a two-hour Jazz Appreciation Workshop organised by the NUS Jazz Band on one of the Saturdays. Below is an extract of the sharing by Chan Wei Nian, President of the NUS Jazz Band:

"As part of our continuing efforts to promote jazz and bring forth our music, the band has conducted a workshop for members of Young NTUC. This workshop was developed in mind for the layman audience who may have some basic understanding of music theory, and are interested to demystify the elements of jazz. A deeper consideration was also given to set up a platform to launch



interested personnel into the genre.

"We started off with a lighthearted jam of familiar tunes from the Jazz Fakebook, a collection of timeless jazz numbers, and started off with the workshop. It covered the essential dates and historical significance of jazz, from its slavery roots to its protagonists and to its current development. The participants were also

“ We are thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with Young NTUC. Together, we hope that the community of jazz can be expanded and nurtured. We look forward to engaging an even larger audience, including you the interested reader, to join us for our future endeavours.”

NUS Jazz Band President Chan Wei Nian

given live demonstrations to key elements in jazz.

For example, to show the pulse that is inherent in most swing numbers, the band played the jazz standard Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars in a straight, almost pop, feel, in a Bossa Nova feel and then in a Swing feel within the same song to illustrate the difference. Participants were also given a basic package to start them off on listening to jazz.

The workshop received positive comments, including enthusiastic participants who came back to attend our Welcome Tea a few weeks after the workshop. Through this, the EXCO has learnt the importance of both performing and educating in our interest and agenda for jazz itself."