# A Champion For Workers Takes His Rest

**NTUC** Vice-President Nithiah Nandan s/o Arumugam died on 21 June 2007, leaving behind his wife and two daughters. He was 57.

Brother Nithiah was diagnosed with renal cell cancer in June 2005. Despite the uncomfortable side effects of treatment, he remained active in union work as the Executive Secretary of the Union of Power and Gas Employees (UPAGE), the union he helped set up in 1996 following the corporatisation of the PUB's electricity and gas departments under the Singapore Power Group. Although he could not be physically present at meetings during the past year, he kept abreast of all developments over the telephone and continued to give guidance to his team before they went into negotiation with the managements of the various unionised power generation companies.

On 12 June 2007, he went through the Singapore Power Collective Agreement with Mrs Lynn Loh-Gan, Singapore Power's Head of Human Resource and Administration, and signed the collective agreement in his home. On 14 June 2007, he signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Senoko Power Limited to extend the expiring Collective Agreement for another three years.

In one of his last interviews, given in May 2007, Brother Nithiah said he was pleased that he had helped build a very strong foundation for UPAGE; his only regret was his inability to groom the next generation of leaders.

"We don't have any major problems in the union. We need to continue to work together, keep moving to bring in new leaders, because if you look at the top echelon of UPAGE, we're all quite old.

"We have to train up leaders. It's not an easy process but we have to try our best. I am saddest that the younger leaders cannot see me at the negotiation table and learn how I lead in negotiations.

"But, the union will move on successfully. I have helped to build a very strong foundation for the union," said Brother Nithiah.

A National Trades Union Congress statement issued by Minister Lim Boon Heng who was Secretary-General from 1993 to 2006, President John De Payva and Secretary-General Lim Swee Say said it is with a deep sense of loss that the labour movement mourns the passing of "Brother Nithiah".

The NTUC statement continued: "A unionist for more than 30 years, Brother Nithiah had dedicated much of his life to serving his fellow workers. Within the labour movement, he had established a reputation for being a champion and a fighter for workers. A man of humble beginnings, he rose up the ranks at work and as a unionist."

The statement added that regardless of his appointment and representation, Brother Nithiah was not afraid to speak out for policies or changes which may have been unpopular, but which he strongly believed in.

"He was a unionist respected by the workers, management, fellow unionists and politicians. He never spoke for himself but always in the interests of workers and the the labour movement."

In 2002, Brother Nithiah agreed to be nominated by the labour movement to speak up for the interests of workers, particularly low-wage workers, in Parliament as a Nominated Member of Parliament.

When asked about his NMP appointment, he said: "I know how workers feel because I was once a daily-rated employee who used to take home about $120 a month."

The NTUC statement said Brother Nithiah was the right person for the job.

"His NMP appointment must have encouraged many people with humble beginnings that, in Singapore, opportunities abound for those with passion and dedication to serve. Apart from his NMP post, Brother Nithiah had also served as an NTUC representative in working and advisory committees at the national level."

UPAGE President Abdul Rahman Mahbob and General Secretary RKS Nachiappan also issued a statement on behalf of the union.

It described Brother Nithiah, UPAGE Executive Secretary since 1999, as an ordinary worker who rose to become an extraordinary leader.

"With union members, Brother Nithiah always exercised much patience in handling difficult and complex issues. He gave them his listening ear. He displayed sincere concern for their interests.

"In his last months, he was still negotiating with management for better benefits for the workers that the union represents. To each senior management staff that visited him, Brother Nithiah stressed how a happy worker could contribute positively to the workplace and boost productivity for the company. Even in his own pain and suffering, he never once forgot his role and responsibility as a unionist."

The statement said union members as well as non-union members still thank Brother Nithiah for the ex-gratia payment that he negotiated for them some 10 years ago.

"When Singapore Power was corporatised, workers came to expect that the company would be listed and they would be given shares. That had been the case in previous listing of companies formed out of statutory boards. However, with the uncertainty of Singapore Power's listing, there was much unhappiness amongst the workers.

"The union, in particular Brother Nithiah, led in the talks with our government leaders. He was able to persuade Mr Lee Hsien Loong, then Deputy Prime Minister, that the workers deserved the ex-gratia payment. Out of goodwill, the government granted them a one-off lump sum ex-gratia payment."

The UPAGE statement said: "The union runs through his blood."

Brother Nithiah was also an active member on the Board of Directors of NTUC Media Co-operative Limited. Board Chairman Seah Kian Peng said Brother Nithiah took a keen interest in the progress of the cooperative and this was the same when Nithiah served on the Board of NTUC Healthcare, when Kian Peng was the Chief Executive Officer then.

"He shared his thoughts and ideas freely with us with respect to our business activities. He guided us on how these ideas could be realised.

"Brother Nithiah, in spite of his seniority and busy work schedule, was a humble and down-to-earth director who found time to talk to everyone in the organisation when he met us. He was someone who spoke his mind without fear or favour. He always had time and a smile for everyone – we shall miss him."

Brother Nithiah's involvement in the labour movement began in 1976, when he was elected a Branch Delegate of the PUB Electrical Workers' Union. He was elected UPAGE's first General Secretary when the union was formed in 1996, and later became its Executive Secretary in 1999.

Brother Nithiah commanded the respect and confidence of the UPAGE leaders and his members. He had seen them through many challenges in the industry since 2001. These include the hiving off of the power generation companies from Singapore Power, reorganisation within Singapore Power Group and significant reorganisation and retrenchment in UPAGE organised companies.

Employers found Brother Nithiah a tenacious and persuasive negotiator. He fought hard for his members and lobbied strongly on their behalf. Yet, he was always fair to employers. Once convinced, Brother Nithiah was a valued partner who was effective in getting workers and unionists to accept difficult but necessary changes brought on by competitive pressures and technological advancements faced by the industry.

Besides UPAGE, Brother Nithiah served a larger community in the labour movement. He had been a member of the NTUC Central Committee since 1994, and was NTUC Vice-President since 1997. He was the labour movement's choice in 2002 for Nominated Member of Parliament, and effectively served his term from 2002 to 2005, championing for the betterment of workers' wellbeing, especially those of low-wage workers. Brother Nithiah had been a Member of the NTUC Industrial Relations Council since 1991; Chairman of the Industrial Relations Committee (Service Sector) since 2003, following a three-year stint as Vice-Chairman from 2000.

He had also been an NTUC representative in important working and advisory committees at the national level – the National Wages Council (Alternate Member from 1994 to 1999; Full Member from 2000 to 2001), Tripartite Committee on Employment of Older Workers (Member, since 2005), Feedback Supervisory Panel (Member, in 2004 and re-appointed in 2005), Quality Council (Member, 1994), Medifund Advisory Council (Member, 1992 to 2002), Cost Review Committee (Member, 1992 to 1993, and 1996), Consumers Association of Singapore Central Committee (Member, 1997 to 2000).

In the areas of work, live and play, Brother Nithiah contributed much to NTUC cooperatives and clubs, helping to stretch the hard-earned dollar for workers and promoting worklife balance for them and their family members. Within the NTUC Family, Brother Nithiah was:

- Founder Member, Board of Directors, NTUC Media Co-operative Limited (since 2002)
- Member, Internal Audit Committee, NTUC Media Co-operative Limited (since 2002)
- Founder Member, NTUC Childcare Co-operative Limited (2006; Institutional Member from 2003 to 2006)
- Member, Board of Directors, NTUC Healthcare Co-operative Limited (1992 to 2001)
- Founder Member, Board of Directors, NTUC Income Insurance Co-operative Limited (1990 to 2003)
- Treasurer, NTUC Club Management Council (1993 to 1996)
- Member, NTUC Club Management Council (1990 to 2002)
- Chairman, NTUC Club Advisory Committee for Happy Days (1999, 2002 to 2005)
- Member, NTUC Club Advisory Committee for NTUC Club (Shenton Way) (1999)
- Member, NTUC Club Advisory Committee for Celebrations (1996)
- Member, NTUC Club Advisory Committee for NTUC Club (Orchard) (1993)

Brother Nithiah received the Bintang Bakti Masyarakat (Public Service Star) in 2001, following the Pingat Bakti Masyarakat (Public Service Medal) in 1997.

Despite his many achievements, Brother Nithiah remained a humble man to the end, his guiding light to his family and friends, perhaps reflected on a simple wood carving decorating the living room wall of his 4-room HDB flat in Serangoon North Avenue 4: "Cherish Yesterday, Dream Tomorrow, Live Today".

Brother Nithiah will be missed.

# Helping Workers Help Themselves

By Jansen Yeo

**LOW-WAGE** workers must be helped and brought into Singapore's social security net through their contributions to the Central Provident Fund. In order to ensure this, the Ministry of Manpower has formed a tripartite committee on CPF and work-related benefits for low-wage workers.

NTUC Director of Industrial Relations Department Ms Cham Hui Fong, NTUC's representative in the committee sums up its mission: "Through this tripartite committee, NTUC would like to work with our partners to ensure that the low-wage workers especially the older ones have a stable job and a decent income to look after themselves and their family."

The Government had implemented the Workfare Income Supplement scheme to assist low-wage workers in finding jobs, increase their income and contribute to their retirement savings. However, some of these workers are not able to enjoy the benefits of WIS because they are not contributing to CPF. They have to address the issues about the non-payment of CPF and educate workers on the benefits of doing so.

Ms Cham added:"The long term goal is to push low-wage workers into higher valued-added and better-paying jobs. To do so, we must change the mindset and to re-skill, upgrade and retrain our low-skilled workers, especially the older workers." ■

> "Through this tripartite committee, NTUC would like to work with our partners to ensure that the low-wage workers especially the older ones have a stable job and a decent income to look after themselves and their family."
>
> Cham Hui Fong

## Areas That The Committee Will Focus On To Help Low-wage Workers

- Pick out key sectors with higher occurrence of informal workers or self-employed persons not contributing to CPF.
- Identify the obstacles for CPF contribution that low-wage workers face
- Initiate and move out programmes to educate workers about CPF and WIS benefits and encourage them to contribute to CPF and Medisave
- Propose and execute measures to make CPF and Medisave contributions worthwhile for low-wage workers and strengthen the protection of their employment benefits
- Coordinate multi-agency initiatives to encourage low-wage workers to make CPF contributions and seek redress on loss of work-related benefits

# Working Hand In Hand

By Jansen Yeo

**SINCE** 1976, Shimano (Singapore) Private Limited and the Metal Industries Workers' Union have enjoyed a special relationship. This collaborative relationship has been cultivated based on trust, mutual respect and understanding to further the interests of the all the parties. Hence, it is no surprise that Shimano was the first to pledge its support for MIWU's Workfare Initiatives by contributing $30,000 to kick start the scheme.

MIWU Executive Secretary Jessie Yeo spoke warmly about the good relationship between the two parties. "We are partners with a close relationship. We are partners in the company's programmes and Shimano will do its part by rolling out any worthy initiatives." She was elated with Shimano's quick and positive responses to its initiatives.

Shimano (Singapore) Managing Director Fuminori Yoshida reiterated its close relationship with the union: "We are like a good married couple. We don't always have to talk but we have mutual respect and understanding for each other."

He added: "Shimano is honoured to be a partner in the launch of MIWU Workfare Initiatives. Through these partnership initiatives, we are able to fulfill our role in Corporate Social Responsibility." ■

## Platform For More

**THE** MIWU Workfare Initiatives were launched with support from its management partner, Shimano (Singapore), who contributed $30,000 to kick start the scheme. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed at the launch, held at NTUC Centre on 18 June 2007. The $30,000 will help fund a series of activities that have been planned under these new initiative. The scheme has targeted two groups of people: Member's children from low-income families and Silver Collar members. The first activity launched is the "MIWU Young Seedlings Programme" to assist the children of members from low-income families. MIWU also took the opportunity to launch the MIWU Silver Collar logo.

### Nurturing Our Young

The MIWU Young Seedling Programme was conceived to provide help for members' children from low-income families of both primary and secondary levels. Successful applicants will receive book vouchers which can then be used to purchase textbooks, supplementary enrichment books and storybooks. This is meant to encourage more students to read. They will also receive transport vouchers to help reduce transportation costs for their families.

### Silver Is The Way To Go

Silver collar workers are also a key target group of MIWU's Workfare Initiatives. The union is working with companies to utilise the ADVANTAGE! Scheme. Courses such as Employability Skills System and Employment Camps will also be organised for the benefits of MIWU's Silver Collar members. Plans have also been made by MIWU to participate in activities and courses which are relevant to senior workers. All these are meant to enhance the workers' employment and employability.

COMMENTARY

# Investing In Our Future

By Heng Chee How

**THE** main article on the back page of The Straits Times on 14 June 2007 carries this headline – "More buyers snap up properties without viewing first". Inside, a market expert was quoted as saying: "Since last June, I have noticed that the number of people buying properties without viewing them has gone up from one in 10 to about 2.5 in 10, and I expect this to grow to three in 10 by the end of the year." The en bloc fever is another subject that is hogging media reporting lately.

Clearly, such behaviour reflects a robust economy, and confidence on the part of buyers.

At the same time, I recall an old idiom - Look before you leap - and I think there is much wisdom there. While we welcome the buoyancy and spending power of a roaring economy, we must not lose our head or be mesmerised by it.

Yes, it is indeed a part of human nature to become caught up with the immediate. When the going gets tough, many of us tend to assume that doomsday has come, and lose spirit. Then, when a boom arrives, some may over-stretch themselves in exuberance. Neither is right, or helpful. We should learn to strike the Golden Mean: fast to seize the opportunity, and not reckless and rigid in our methods but tenacious when facing difficulties.

Last weekend, I presented 350 scholarships and bursaries worth $75,000 on behalf of three unions. I reminded the audience that one big reason why Singapore was able to rise quickly from poverty to first-world status was because of a big focus by individuals, families, unions and government on education and training. It is this kind of investment that builds a sustained capability. It is this way of looking at things that allow us to prepare well for success over the long haul, even as we pick up good deals in the meantime. ■

# Gestures For A Brighter Tomorrow

**Good work should always be appreciated. Be it at the workplace or in schools. Four unions - Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union, Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union, Chemical Industries Employees' Union and Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union have done just that. Families of members who have received the scholarships and bursaries are all smiles as their unions share their financial burdens. Naseema Banu Maideen and Jansen Yeo speak to some of the scholarship and bursary award recipients.**

## Rewards For Hard Work

**THROUGH** its annual scholarship and bursary awards presentation this year, SMMWU duly recognised the good efforts of about 120 school-going children of its members. The scholarship and bursary grants acknowledged the educational achievements of members' children. At the same time, it gave a financial helping hand to the members.

Member of Parliament for Hong Kah GRC and Advisor to the SMMWU Yeo Khirn Khai commended the union's move in providing better lives for its members.

"This year, scholarship awards have been extended to university students for the first time. We have given out $37,950 in total, a rise from about $20,000 last year. Our gestures to improve members' lives will continue," said the union's Assistant Secretary-General Joseph Chua.

### A Timely Recognition

"The award is recognition for her hard work," said Mr Chan Teck Chye. A technician at EM Serve Private Limited, Mr Chan, 50, is glad that the union has provided some support in his goal of guiding his daughter to achieve greater heights. A SMMWU scholarship award recipient, Chan Ying Jie,18, is an Arts and Social Sciences undergraduate at the National University of Singapore. She hopes to gain a better understanding of the society through the Economics major curriculum that she is pursuing.

### Always There For You

With four school-going children, Madam Rosnah Atan, 42, a sales administrator at Sharp Roxy Sales Singapore Private Limited, was left to spin the family wheel single-handedly when her husband was retrenched a year ago.

The union's Care and Share vouchers and Back To School vouchers went a long way in easing her financial loads. The bursary award given to her daughter Nur Farah Atika Jaffar who is a student at Yusof Ishak Secondary School, will help in a way too, said Madam Rosnah. ■

## Our Future Investments

"Your union cares for you, just like your parents," said Mr Heng Chee How, NTUC Deputy Secretary-General. He was speaking to the students and their families at the BATU-CIEU-SMEEU's Joint Scholarship and Bursary Presentation Ceremony, held at NTUC Centre on 16 June 2007.

Mr Heng referred to the ceremony as an "investment ceremony" and noted an important lesson from Singapore's short history. "When we gained independence more than 40 years ago, our chances of survival and prosperity were low. Many foreign companies viewed Singapore as a high risk investment country, with poorly educated citizens and strikes occurring frequently."

The Government and labour movement understood the importance of human resource, invested in education and now, 60 percent of all Singaporeans will have a minimum of secondary school education. To maintain a steady supply of workers, we must "retrain workers and invest in education".

A total of $74,300 was awarded to 347 recipients.

### For A Better Life

A better life is what Mr Anthony Kam, 56, uses to motivate his three children to work hard. "I always tell them that if they want a good future, they must study hard."

A fitter at Singapore Technologies Marine Limited, Mr Kam, has been a union member for 22 years, including 19 years as a union official. His son, Kelvin, 17, a first-year student at Hwa Chong Institution was awarded the SMEEU scholarship. This is the second such award his family has received. His oldest daughter Loretta, 30, who is a medical professional now, was also awarded the SMEEU scholarship in 1990.

### A Spark Of Motivation

Mr Hosini joined the union 25 years ago. When he was retrenched by DaiNippon Ink and Chemicals Asia Pacific Private Limited in August 2006, the union helped him find another employment. He eventually found a job as a daily-rated contract worker at Singapore Press Holdings Print Centre.

His step-son Rama Chandra, 9, is a recipient of CIEU's bursary award.

"I'm very happy for Rama. I hope it'll encourage him to study harder in the future." ■

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## Membership Has Its Rewards

**NTUC** Club is giving away attractive prizes and has lined up a series of free activities and for NTUC Members in June.

Canoe in the sea off Pair Rips beach under the watchful guidance of trained instructors; rock climb at Costa Sands Resort (Pair Rips); join in the Big Foot Challenge at Downtown East's Begonia Lawn and soak in the fun at the treasure Chest Watch telepath at Wild Wet Theme Park.

Check out the details at www.downtowneast.com.sg. ■

### Not Yet A Member?

**SIGN** up at www.ntuc.org.sg/members/becomeamember.asp. Or you may contact us at Tel: 6213 8008 Fax: 6327 3740 or e-mail to membership@ntuc.org.sg.

Sign up before 31 August 2007 and win prizes worth $150,000 including a brand new Chevrolet Captiva.

## Restructuring at NTUC Income

**AS PART** of its restructuring, NTUC Income has created a Chief Risk Officer's position while its fitness centre operations and consumer loans (mortgages and personal loans) business have ceased.

Besides the hiring of Mr Ken Ng and Miss Lynette Ang as Chief Actuary and Marketing Director, NTUC Income has made some reshuffle to its senior appointments:

Mr Chan Tee Seng, currently the General Manager of Corporate Services Division, has been appointed the General Manager of the cooperative's Group & Health Division.

James Kang, currently the Chief Technology Officer, will expand his portfolio to include the Customer Division.

NTUC Income also sees three general managers leaving the cooperative: Mr Toi See Jong, General Manager, Life and Health Division; Mr Anthony Chia, General Manager, Marketing Division and Mr Nicholas Rhodes, the Appointed Actuary.

According to Income Chief Executive Officer Tan Suee Chieh, the reorganisation and hiring are part of its ongoing renewal process to become a first rate financial institution.

No staff was retrenched in the latest exercise. ■

Union Box

# Game For All Nationalities

By Raven Lee

**KABADDI** is a popular game in Bangladesh and India. The teams in the game take turns to send a raider into the opponent's half to tag players out. The raider must chant "Kabaddi" repeatedly until he is out of breath, which will end his turn, hence the name of the game.

The Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Employees' Union held its first Kabaddi Tournament for the global workers recently. The exciting event had eight teams of 10 players competing for more than $2,000 worth of prizes and trophies.

A 300-strong crowd gathered at the Kabaddi field at Sungei Road to cheer for their teams.

Mr Veeramani, SMEEU Executive Committee Member and the Organising Chairman explained: "We wanted to do something that will excite the NTS workers. And I think we very much did it because the turnout was overwhelming and everyone was all smiles. We will continue to do more to serve this segment of workers."

Mr P Prakash, 25, works at Keppel Shipyard said animatedly after the vigorous leg and lungs workout: "I enjoyed the game very much. It reminds me of my hometown and I am happy to meet so many new friends over my favourite sport." ■

# My First Young SISEU Learning Cum Adventure Camp

By Tessa Low LiJun

**"SO, CAN** you make it for the camp? 15 June to 16 June?" asked my father yet again.

"Yes," I finally gave him a confirmation, albeit a reluctant one. My June holiday has been filled with numerous activities and I was hesitant to go for the camp as I worried about the pile of holiday homework I had yet to complete. I had also been to Sarimbun Scout Camp earlier in the year for my Secondary Three Leadership Camp, and I was thinking: "We'll be doing the same things again.

Yet on the morning of 15 June, I couldn't help but feel more than just a bit excited at the prospect of being out in the "wild" again as my father drove us past the turf club into Kranji – the fact that there would be dozens of mosquitoes, dusty and sandy wooden bunks, uncountable ants, mud and lizards did not deter me.

We did many exciting activities during the camp, such as Nature Hunt, archery, the Tyre Tunnel (where we wriggled and crawled through a short tunnel made of tyres, to come splashing down into the sloshy mud on the other end), the War Game (with two teams shower each other with water bombs) and River Crossing. The most thrilling activity was the Challenge Valley. One had to put on a Personal Floating Device and climb up a slippery, muddy ladder to get up to the platform. From there, he would sit on a foam sheet and slide down the metal slide from the platform at high speed - straight into the tea-coloured pond which was affectionately dubbed the "Milo Pond". It was, however, not the highlight of the camp. The climax came during the campfire, naturally. We watched the fire being started, sang traditional campfire songs, cheered and laughed our way through as we watched our parents doing silly actions as they joined in the fun. And now we have to endure listening to my younger brother's constant off-key and crude ditty of "campfire burning, burning, burning in the dark, dark night. Yipee Yipee Ya, Yippee Yippee Ya…"

Being only a one-night camp, it passed quickly, and all too soon, I had to say goodbye to the 30 new friends I had made. Even though we barely had slightly more than a day to get to know one another, we had bonded in some special way and as I left the campsite. I have learnt to be better in relating to others and working as a team.

A printed certificate, given as a commemoration of the camp, now lies proudly on my table back home. While I can't wait for the next Young SISEU camp, I think I'd better sit down and do my Biology worksheet now. ■

*A sploshy finish to the Challange Valley slide.*

*"Help! my leg is stuck."*

*"Hold the rope firmly to cross safely to the far bank."*

*The young Legolas in training.*

*"She will be eating six big pizzas when she comes...Yippee Ya Ya; Yippee Yippe Ya..."*

*The Big Children "gelek" from head to toe to wow the young campers.*


## Join The New New Membership Club For 12 To 21 Years Old

NTUC Club is starting a new membership club for non-working youth aged between 12 and 21 years and full-time students aged between 22 and 25 years.

Besides enjoying low rates on theme park admission, chalet stay and Zone X gaming arcades, members can buy Cathay movie tickets at a big discount and have exclusive use of member lounges at AMK Hub and at e!hub@Downtown East. Membership fee starts from $29 for one year to $69 for the Ultimate Membership (up to 21 years old).

The club will be officially launched on 6 July 2007. It is offering a pre-launch Ultimate Membership promotional fee for children of NTUC Members at $29 for first sign-up, $24 for the second sign-up and $19, by 30 June 2007. ■

For details and application...
please go to www.ntucclub.com/1221 or call Caroline Chen at Tel: 6589 1611 or Wayne Tay at Tel: 6589 1652.

# 职总领袖致尼迪雅遗孀维玛拉女士的慰问信

亲爱的维玛拉女士：

我们全体工会会员，为您的丈夫尼迪雅的辞世感到深切哀悼。

我们与尼迪雅先生的交情甚深。他是一个老实、谦虚和坦率的人。他年幼时家境清贫，失去接受正统教育的机会。

虽然他是一名日薪工友，却能通过半工半读，考获了两张第三级全国技工证书。他在夜校寒窗苦读了两年，终于考取了工业关系文凭。从此，他其实可以选择另谋高就，却没有离开，因为许多工友都把他当作领袖，对他感到信任，觉得他了解工友的问题，是他们的战士和明灯。尼迪雅毅然接受委托，以简练直率的言语为他们发言。他成功说服许多日薪工友接受再训练课程，为他们的人生再创一个新高峰。由于他的无私奉献，两千多个日薪工友和他们家庭的生活素质得到了提升。

在90年代中期，公用事业局进行业务重组，电力与煤气业务纳入新加坡能源公司的业务范围。接着在2001年，第二轮的业务重整使电力和煤气业务市场得到了进一步的开放。秉持着无比的耐心和敏锐触觉，以及对事态变迁的深入了解，尼迪雅和他共事的电力与煤气业雇员联合会的同志齐心合力，解决了变迁所带来的各种问题。

尼迪雅从不逃避责任，如果说他有什么座右铭，那将是：“如果我们能够帮忙，我们一定会帮忙！”对此，我们觉得他受之无愧。

90年代期间，尼迪雅受委为生活费与商业成本检讨委员会成员，该委员会关注所有因生活费提高而萌生的问题。尼迪雅以坦率的个性，在该会极力为低薪工友倾吐心声。

后来，我们推举他成为官委议员。他从2002年到2004年，在国会服务了两年半。他的表现突出，引导议员们注意普通老百姓的日常生活问题。

自1994年，他在职总中央委员会服务期间也表现出色。为此他在1997年成为我们的副会长。

我们为尼迪雅感到骄傲，他是我国工运的模范领袖，受到广大工友群众的尊敬。

即使身罹重病，他仍然心系工会与工友，继续为工运付出心力，参与劳资谈判，直到生命的最后一天。

我们感谢您以及您的两个女儿（约格斯华黎和普拉维达）在他全心全力为工友服务时，所给予他的支持和鼓励。

对于尼迪雅的辞世，我们和您一样深感悲痛。他将长久留在我们心间。

**前职总秘书长（1993–2006年）林文兴**
**职总会长德培华**
**职总秘书长林瑞生**

# 电力与煤气业雇员联合会秘书长尼迪雅千古

# 高瞻远瞩

自1976年以来，尼迪雅坚持不懈维护日薪工友的利益。他原本有很多机会转职为月薪工友，但他拒绝了。他心想，要是这么做，就没有人为日薪工友代言。他的决定是罕见的：他宁可放弃改善自己和家人生活的机会，而去帮助2000多户家庭提升生活素质。

尼迪雅深感教育和终身学习的重要性。他常为自己没有在读完中四之后继续升学感到遗憾。为此，他不轻易放过任何学习的机会。

他充分认识到，在经济环球化的时代，继续深造和掌握优越技能不可或缺。

基于这个认识，他常鼓励日薪工友提升技能，以便向前迈进。他告诉工友们，要是没有在电力和煤气业私营化之前掌握好较高的操作技术，便无法适应新工作环境的需求。

为日薪工友的前途着想，他说服公用事业局培训工友，并提拔那些考取了第3级全国技工证书的技工，让他们转换身份为月薪工友。

为了以身作则，虽然尼迪雅已经拥有第3级全国技工证书和工业关系文凭，但他还是决定最后一个才换职为月薪工友。

结果，超过2000名日薪工友的收入比尼迪雅来得高；而其中九成升级为技工的工友也保住了工作。这群技工，很多人今天已经是高级技工了。有鉴于此，工友们都感谢他有远见。

尼迪雅的无私奉献令人感佩至深。这也是他对工运的突出贡献。

正因为他的非凡表现，工运界推荐他担当官委议员。在2002年至2004年担任官委议员期间，他在国会为工友发表心声，并呼吁关注低薪工友的处境和需求。

1996年，尼迪雅成为全职的工会领袖，并协助新加坡能源公司处理电力与煤气业私营化的问题。

在这期间，他参与了公用事业局日薪工友联合会与公用事业局职员联合会合并成为电力与煤气业雇联的事宜。在电力与煤气业雇联临时委员会中，他的威望很高。

工会合并的工作并不容易，合并双方的领袖必须融合成一支团队。作为代表日薪工友的临时委员会成员，他在谈判期间直言不讳。代表月薪工友的工会领袖见他为人诚恳，非但不反感，反而给予信任。六个月之后，临时委员会解散，尼迪雅当选为新工会的秘书长。

担任电力与煤气业雇员联合会秘书长之后，他礼贤下士，虚心听取意见，接受建设性的批评，处处表现尊重其他工会领袖的风范。在执行工作时，他总会花时间解释个人的理念，让相关的会员心诚悦服。所以，每逢投票表决事项，常常获得会员的拥护。

尼迪雅关心工会，即使罹病时期行动不便，他还是坚持通过电话询问工会的情况，并提出宝贵的意见。

2007年6月12日，他与新加坡能源公司的人力资源与行政部主管颜佩芳共同审阅工会与资方拟定的集体协议，并在正式签署仪式之前的一天，在家中代表工会在文件上签字。2007年6月14日，他又代表工会与圣诺哥能源签署了一份备忘录，表示劳资双方同意把即将期满的集体协议延长三年。

尼迪雅在谈判桌上与管理层和政府代表谈判时，常常表现得立场坚定。

至今，工会会员甚至非工会会员仍记得他在约10年前争取到的恩恤付款。当新加坡能源企业化后，工友们期待公司挂牌上市并得到一些股份。然而，由于挂牌上市的事宜仍不确定，因此工友们感到不满。

电力与煤气业雇员联合会全体执委，特别是尼迪雅，带头与政府领袖谈判。当时的李显龙副总理接受了尼迪雅的建议，决定给予工友一笔恩恤金。

## 永远的工会领袖

作为工会领袖，尼迪雅处事耐心。面对困难的课题时，他往往仔细听取各方意见，表现出诚挚的态度。

在他人生的最后一个月，他仍与资方谈判，为工友争取更高的福利。他对每一个来探访他的高级管理人员表示，只有快乐的工人才能提高生产力，为公司作贡献。即使病情使得他痛苦难当，他仍不忘记工会领袖应尽的责任和义务。

尼迪雅是从一个普通的工人锻炼成非凡的领袖。他的嘉言懿行，将激励着工会里的每一名同志，沿着他指引的道路迈步前进。

**电力与煤气业雇联会长阿都拉曼马博**
**电力与煤气业雇联会秘书长纳加潘**
**率领全体执行理事会成员及职员**

# 同敬挽

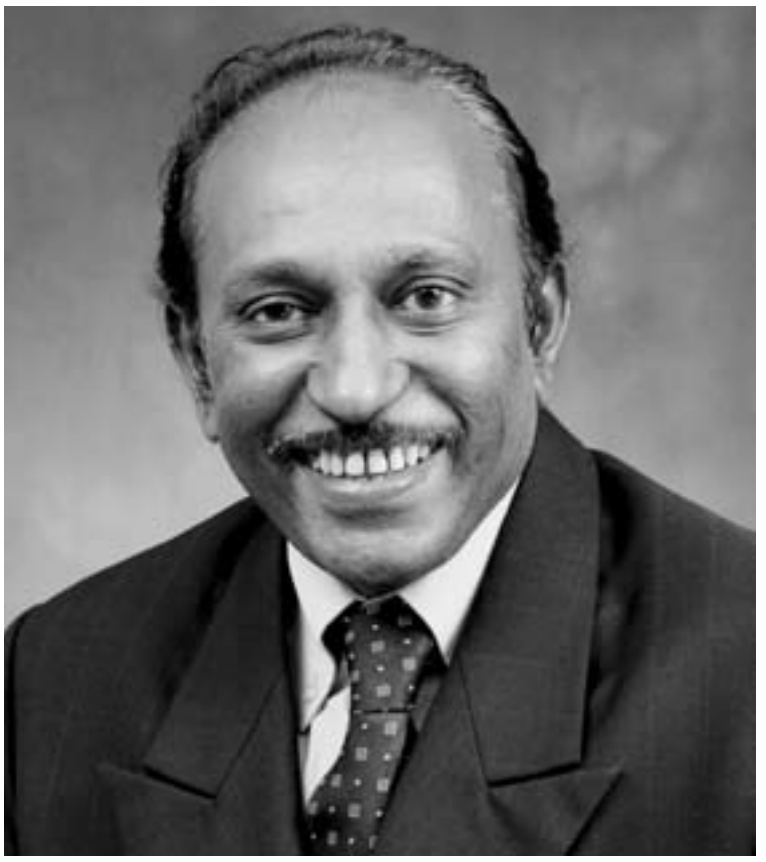
# 安息吧！工友战士

职总副会长尼迪雅不幸于6月21日逝世，享年57岁，遗下妻子和两名女儿。尼迪雅也是电力与煤气业雇主联合会执行秘书。该联合会是在1993年公用事业局的电力与煤气业务纳入新加坡能源公司后，在尼迪雅的协助下成立。

2005年6月尼迪雅不幸罹患肾癌。虽然病魔缠身让尼迪雅无法出席工会的会议，但他仍不时通过电话与工会领袖联系，充分了解工会的最新发展。此外，在工会与各管理层进行商谈之前，他也给工会领袖提供指导。

与此同时，尽管接受治疗期间出现副作用，尼迪雅仍忍着身体不适，热衷参与工会近期的重大活动。这包括在家里与新加坡能源公司的人力资源与行政部门的主管颜佩芳签署劳资共同拟定的集体协定，以及签署延长圣诺歌能源公司的集体协定三年的备忘录。

尼迪雅在上个月最后一次接受媒体访问时表示，对自己能为工会打下稳固基础做出贡献感到欣慰。不过，他为自己身体抱恙无法栽培新一代工会领袖，感到遗憾。



他说：“工会目前没有重大问题。我们需要继续共同合作，引进新血。因为工会的执行委员很多年纪都相当大了。我们得训练工会领袖。虽然训练的过程不简单，但我们必须尽最大的努力去做。让我难受的是，年轻的工会领袖没有机会在谈判桌上看到我如何与资方谈判，让他们从中学习谈判的技巧。”

职总发表的文告对尼迪雅同志的病逝致以深切哀悼，并表示他的逝世是工运的一大损失。职总的文告是由职总秘书长林瑞生、职总会长德培华以及总理公署部长林文兴，也是前职总秘书长（1993年至2006年）联合签署。

文告说，尼迪雅出身贫寒，却努力向上，最终成为工会领袖。担任工会领袖超过30年的他，献出大部分的生命为工友服务。他的努力为他在工运界赢得工友战士的美誉。

对于不受工友欢迎的政策和改变，尼迪雅不管当时他的职位和代表身份为何，总是不畏惧地提出来。文告指出：“他是一位受到工友、管理层、工会领袖和政治领袖尊敬的工会代表。”

2002年，尼迪雅在职总的推荐下，同意出任国会官委议员，为工友尤其是低薪工友，在国会中就他们关心的课题以及利益发表意见。尼迪雅在生前表示：“我能理解低薪工友的感受，因为我也曾是日薪员工，每月的净薪只有约120元。”

职总的文告指出，尼迪雅除了受委担任官委议员职务之外，也以职总代表身份参与多个国家级的顾问委员工作。与此同时，他的官委议员职务，鼓舞了许多出身贫寒却充满献身精神的国人。

电力与煤气业雇主联合会会长阿都拉曼马博与秘书长纳加潘也联合发表了哀悼文。哀悼文说，面对复杂和难以处理的课题，尼迪雅总是耐心处理，并且聆听工友的心声，充分展现出他对工友的关怀。当高级管理人员前去探病，尼迪雅也不忘向他们强调开心的员工能够对工作所做出积极的贡献，进而提升生产力。尼迪雅在病重期间继续与管理层协商，为工会会员争取更多的利益。尽管饱受身体的痛楚，尼迪雅从没有忘记身为工会领袖所应该履行的责任，无时无刻想着工会，想着工友。

事实上，除了工会会员之外，许多非会员也感谢尼迪雅在10年前为他们争取的恩恤金。当年，新加坡能源业务需要重组以便私营化，许多工友原以为公司上市后，会向他们分发股票。这是过去一些脱离法定机构并成为上市公司的机构的做法。但是，后来新加坡能源公司的上市决定还不明确，引起许多工友的不满。

为此，尼迪雅带领工会的领袖与政府官员进行谈判。他成功说服当时的副总理李显龙，向员工发放恩恤金。结果，所有员工都一次过获得了一笔恩恤金。

尼迪雅也是职总媒体合作社和职总保健合作社的董事之一。媒体合作社主席谢健平表示，尼迪雅同志非常关心两家合作社的进展。谢健平曾任职总保健合作社的总裁。

谢健平说：“对于合作社的事务，他都乐意地与大家分享他的所思所想。他也知道我们该如何实现理想。尽管尼迪雅同志年纪大了，工作也忙碌，但是他却谦虚而且实事求是。每次见面，他都会跟我们聊天。他勇于直言，脸上常挂着笑容……我们怀念他。”

尼迪雅是在1976年加入工运，当时他获选成为公用事业局电器工友联合会分行代表。1996年电力与煤气业雇主联合会成立，他成为第一任秘书长，并在1999年担任执行秘书职务。

尼迪雅同志赢得电力与煤气业雇员联合会工会领袖和会员的尊重和信心。自2001年起，他带领工会同仁共同克服重重挑战。这些挑战包括新能源分成三家经营的事宜，以及处理裁员的问题。

尼迪雅给雇主的印象是一位择善固执和具有说服能力的协商者。一直以来，他致力为会员谋求福利，代表他们发表心声。然而，他对待雇主的态度却是合理的。由于市场的激烈竞争与科技的发达，为了应付挑战，他必须说服工友和工会会员接受痛苦但又有必要的改变。

除了为电力与煤气业雇员联合会做出巨大的贡献，尼迪雅也在多方面为工运付出努力。在2002年，他获得工运提名为官委议员，并从2002到2004年代表工人在国会里发言，维护低薪工友的利益，履行了官委议员的职责。

尼迪雅关心工人的福利，参与职总合作社和俱乐部的工作，为工友节省开支，并推广工作与生活平衡。

以下是尼迪雅同志多年来在工运组织所担任的职务。

- 职总中央委员会成员（自1994年）
- 职总副会长（自1997年）
- 职总工业关系理事会成员（自1991年）
- 工业关系委员会（服务业）主席（自2003年）
- 工业关系委员会副主席（自2000年）
- 全国工资理事会候补成员（1994年至1999年）
- 全国工资理事会成员（2000年至2001年）
- 提高年长工人受雇能力劳资政委员会成员（自2005年）
- 民意处理组监察委员会成员（2004年，2005年再受委任）
- 品质理事会成员（1994年）
- 保健基金咨询理事会成员（1992年至2002年）
- 生活成本检讨委员会成员（1992年至1993年，1996年）
- 新加坡消费人协会中央委员会成员（1997年至2000年）
- 职总媒体合作社创始成员与董事会董事（自2002年）
- 职总媒体合作社内审委员会成员（自2002年）
- 职总托儿合作社创始成员（2006年，2003年至2006年担任团体会员）
- 职总保健合作社成员和董事会董事（1992年至2001年）
- 职总英康保险合作社创始成员和董事会董事（1990年至2003年）
- 职总俱乐部管理理事会财政（1993年至1996年）
- 职总俱乐部管理理事会成员（1990年至2002年）
- 职总俱乐部Happy Days咨询委员会主席（1999年，2002年至2005年）
- 职总俱乐部咨询委员会（珊顿大道）委员（1999年）
- 职总俱乐部Celebrations咨询委员会成员（1996年）
- 职总俱乐部咨询委员会（乌节）成员（1993年）

为了表扬尼迪雅同志在公共服务的优越表现，我国政府在1997年和2001年分别颁发公共服务奖章和公共服务之星奖章给他。

虽然尼迪雅取得多项成就，但始终还是保持谦虚。他在实龙岗北4道4房式组屋的住家客厅墙壁上挂着一幅简单的木雕作品，作品上写着这样的一段话。“珍惜昨天，梦想明天，活好今天。”这段话将深深地铭记在尼迪雅的家人和朋友心中。

尼迪雅同志，我们将永远怀念你。■