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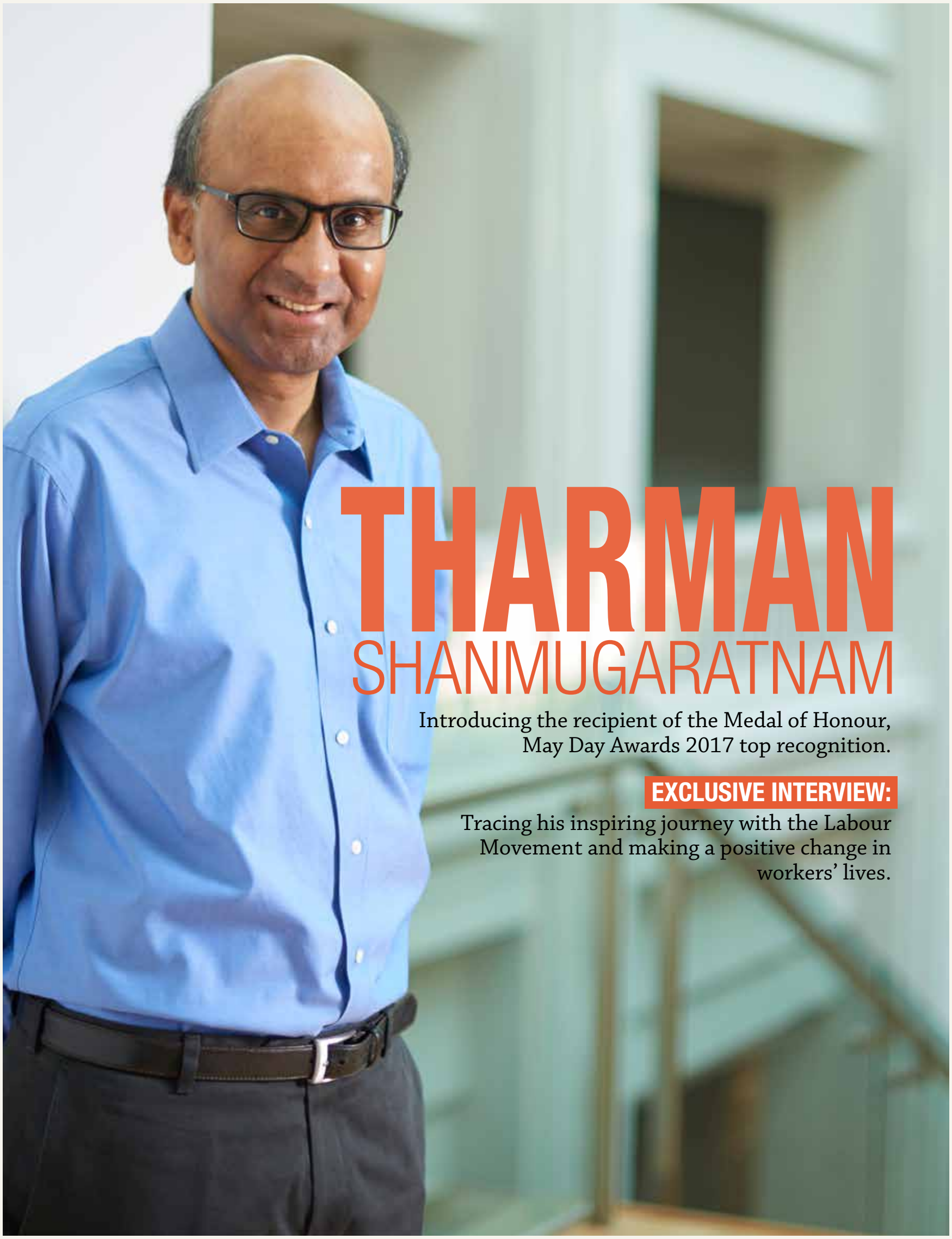


THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM

Introducing the recipient of the Medal of Honour, May Day Awards 2017 top recognition.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW:

Tracing his inspiring journey with the Labour Movement and making a positive change in workers' lives.

TOP STORIES

6 Appreciating Domestic Employees
Foreign domestic employees can look forward to having their personal accident insurance coverage enhanced from October this year.

9 Keeping it Fair in Freelancing
The Labour Movement organises its second trade fair to support the growing pool of freelancers and the self-employed.

12 Everything Sports
Action, competition, camaraderie and sporting fun… these elements come together in our photo spread round up of the U Games season.

ICYMI

ntuc National Trades Union Congress
MAY DAY AWARDS — 2017 —

May Day Awards 2017

Next Issue: Look out for our coverage of this year's new look May Day Awards 2017 which honours individuals and partners for their efforts in advancing the Labour Movement's initiatives.

For more news on the May Day Awards 2017, check out this link ***http://bit.ly/MayDayAwards2017.***

Bringing Singapore and its People Forward

DPM Tharman, the recipient of this year's highest May Day award, talks about the challenges facing Singapore workers, the importance of tripartism, trust and lifelong learning.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

What would Singapore have been like today without an NTUC and the spirit of tripartism?

Sharing his thoughts recently in an exclusive interview with *NTUC This Week*, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam said Singapore would have been like many other countries in the world where trust is weak.

"You get an unwillingness on the part of employers and unions to compromise, and unemployment tends to go up and stay up over time.

"Trust has been built up in Singapore over the years that allows some give and take between the Labour Movement and employers. We have to use this trust not just to avoid conflict, but to go forward in the big new game of lifelong learning," emphasised DPM Tharman.

He also received the Labour Movement's highest award for May Day 2017, the Medal of Honour, at a ceremony held on 13 May 2017.

USEFUL UNION FEEDBACK

DPM Tharman was Singapore's Finance Minister from December 2007 till September 2015. According to him, several major initiatives really started from the Labour Movement and were then shaped through further interactions with union leaders, businesses and citizens.

"The Progressive Wage Model started with the union movement. Likewise, our Inclusive Growth Programme, to help companies upgrade their workers.

"Things often end up as Budget initiatives that started with ideas from the union movement. That's the way we have to continue. The ideas can come from anywhere. But the union movement in particular, has a concern for both workers' livelihoods and the health of enterprises, and they bring the two together very well," emphasised DPM Tharman.

THE BIG NEW OPPORTUNITY

DPM Tharman explained that lifelong learning is the big new opportunity. It will enable Singaporeans to deal with two critical things in the future.

These are firstly, to pick up a new toolkit of skills when an industry is disrupted and jobs are lost and secondly, for jobs that still exist, to get workers to keep deepening their skills so they can stay relevant and get satisfaction on the job.

DPM Tharman said it is still early days in the SkillsFuture journey.

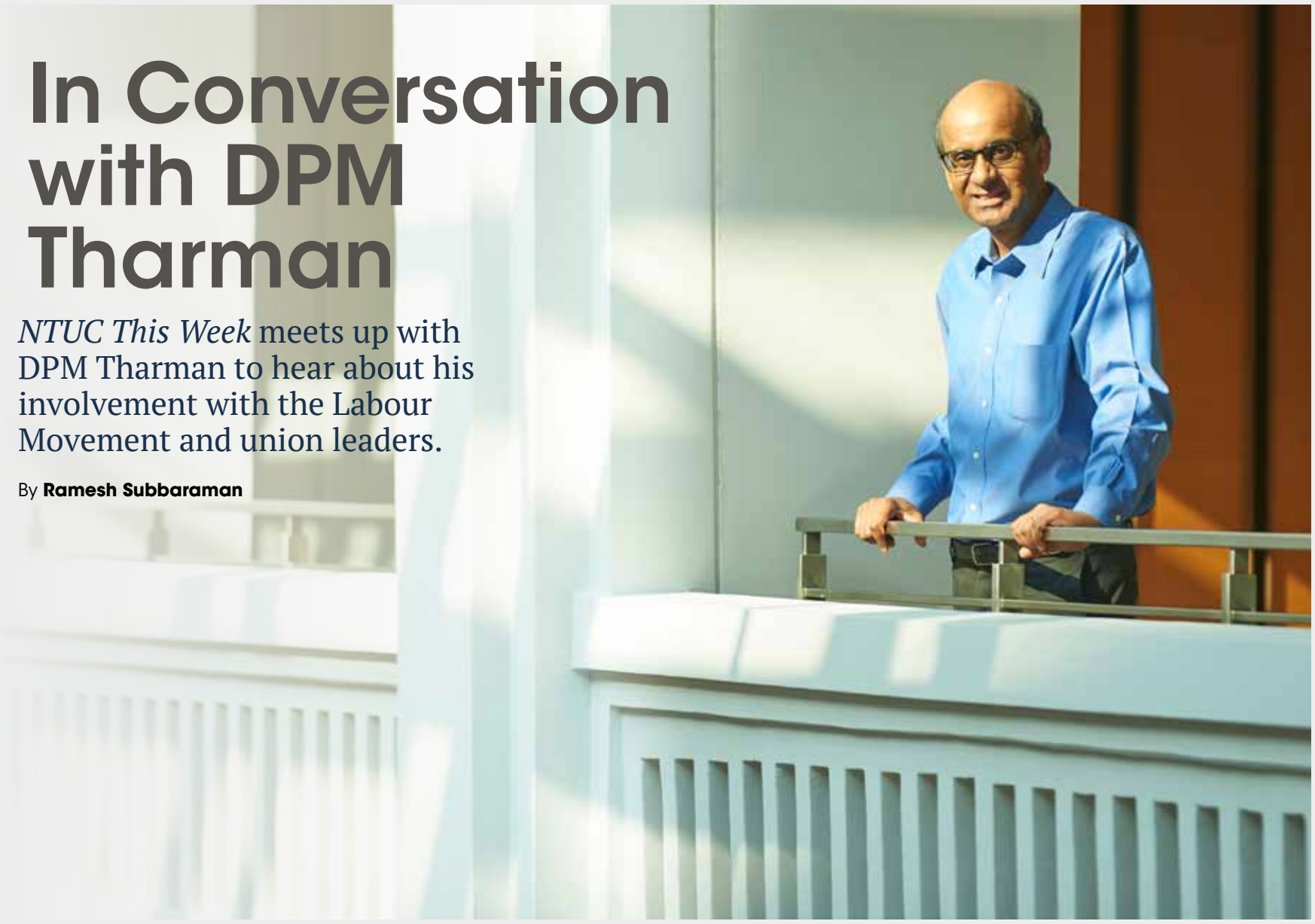
"Most people know about it now. And more are starting to plan their learning. We tell people, there is no need to rush. We will help them on their own learning journeys," he said.

Asked about the role of organisations like NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) in lifelong learning, he shared that the institute and intermediaries like it will bring people to the Government schemes, and take the schemes out to people.

"They play a critical role in helping firms and individuals to upgrade themselves. It is not good enough to have schemes and Government funding. We need market intermediaries who can help SMEs [small- and medium-sized enterprises] especially to make the most of these schemes.

"It requires active coordination on the ground, industry by industry, so that firms actually upgrade their people and do so continually," he said.

DPM Tharman's hope is to develop every Singaporean so that they can create the best future for themselves and for Singapore.



In Conversation with DPM Tharman

NTUC This Week meets up with DPM Tharman to hear about his involvement with the Labour Movement and union leaders.

By **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam was conferred the Medal of Honour for this year's May Day celebrations. He speaks to us on tripartism, unions, policies and workers.

NTUC This Week: You were an advisor to the Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union (SISEU) from February 2007 till March 2011 and the Chemical Industries Employees' Union (CIEU) from April 2002 to January 2007. How did the involvement help you with your policy formulation?

DPM Tharman: There is nothing like listening to people who are on the ground, either organising workers or trying to run their businesses well. What we used to do, both in SISEU and CIEU, was to meet unionists and businesses jointly and chat about the problems and what we could do together. I found that very useful in shaping policy. You know what the problems are, you know what's realistic and you try and craft policies that can be really implemented and aren't just based on an ideal.

You are the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Ong Teng Cheong Labour Leadership Institute (OTCi). Tell us about that role.

It has really been my privilege to serve in OTCi for many years. The unionists who take the OTCi courses are inspiring examples of lifelong learning themselves. They are mainly in their mid-30s to late-40s, and some in their 50s. They have been out of school for a long while, and studies are not the first thing that come to anyone's mind when we are there. They share the same challenges, and spur each other on. OTCi has also been transformed over the years through the efforts of the leaders of the Labour Movement, the academics and the rest of us who are working with them. It has got a much broader reach. It not only addresses the learning needs of union leaders but also a growing group of professionals, managers and executives, those working in small- and medium-sized enterprises, and also the freelancers. These are very important, new priorities for NTUC and we have been bringing them onto our OTCi programme as well.

In this era of disruptive technologies, how will the Government ensure that low-wage workers are not left behind?

We are not sparing any effort in helping lower-skill workers, and there is more to be done. A fair number of them are still in informal or irregular work. We must, as much as possible, get them trained and ensure employers treat them fairly. I would say we still don't have a widespread management culture in Singapore of wanting to invest in developing each and every individual in the team. We have to have that much more inclusive culture to be widespread amongst management.

What can the Labour Movement do to bring about this inclusive culture?

The union movement is working with employers, nudging and pushing them to invest in workers' learning, and to make full use of Government schemes. It's about collective bargaining not just over wages, which is of course important, but negotiating over the effort and investment that companies must make in workers' learning.

Medal of Honour

The Labour Movement is proud to present the Medal of Honour to DPM Tharman this year. It is the highest May Day award and is conferred on special individuals who have rendered distinguished service to the Labour Movement. Here is a quick look at a few of his many initiatives and achievements over the years.

- Was the driving force behind several national initiatives like the SkillsFuture Movement and the Wage Credit Scheme.
- Instilled a deeper sense of tripartism among the three councils he headed – the Council for Skills, Innovation and Productivity (CSIP), SkillsFuture Council and the National Productivity Council.
- Oversaw the development of 23 Industry Transformation Maps (ITMs) and took a very keen interest to ensure workers benefitted from them. Seven ITMs have been launched so far.
- Helped with the growth of the Ong Teng Cheong Labour Leadership Institute as its Chairman from 2002 to date.
- Devoted himself to the advancement of the Chemical Industries Employees' Union (CIEU) from 2002 till 2007 and the Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union (SISEU) from 2007 till 2011.

CONGRATULATIONS

Brother Tharman Shanmugaratnam

Deputy Prime Minister &
Coordinating Minister for
Economic and Social Policies

Medal of Honour Award

KONE

KONE Pte Ltd

Plaque of Commendation Award

Brother Teo Siong Seng

Managing Director

Pacific International Lines Pte Ltd

Medal of Commendation Award

SISEU

Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union
No. 3 Bukit Pasoh Road #05-00 Singapore 089817
Tel: 6220 3345 Fax: 6220 5187
E-mail: siseu@ntuc.org.sg Website: www.siseu.org.sg

CONGRATULATIONS

Brother Tharman Shanmugaratnam

Deputy Prime Minister & Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies

Medal of Honour Award

KANEKA

Kaneka Singapore Co. (Pte) Ltd

Plaque of Commendation Award

CIEU
The Union That Cares

Chemical Industries Employees' Union
3 Bukit Pasoh Road #06-00 Singapore 089817
Tel: 6220 5677 Fax: 6220 6047 E-mail: cieu@ntuc.org.sg

CONGRATULATIONS

Brother Gary Wah Yunn Harn

General Treasurer
Building Construction And Timber Industries Employees' Union

Comrade of Labour Award

WIS
WEISHEN

Weishen Industrial Services Pte Ltd

Plaque of Commendation Award

BATU

Building Construction And Timber Industries Employees' Union
3 Bukit Pasoh Road #03-00 Singapore 089817
Tel: 6220 1233 Fax: 6220 9404
E-mail: batu@ntuc.org.sg Website: www.batu.org.sg

Appreciating Domestic Employees

Foreign domestic workers to get more personal accident insurance coverage from October this year.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

To ensure all foreign domestic workers (FDWs) are adequately compensated should they become permanently disabled or pass away during their employment in Singapore, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will increase the minimum amount assured for their personal accident insurance (PAI) from the current $40,000 to $60,000.

Minister of State for Manpower Sam Tan made this announcement in his speech at the NTUC May Day Domestic Employees Celebration held at the Youth Park @ Somerset on 7 May 2017.

"Besides employers, the Government also has a role to play to ensure that FDWs are adequately protected and have peace of mind while they work in Singapore. We regularly review our policies, taking into consideration constructive feedback from stakeholders," he said.

Since January this year, the Centre for Domestic Employees (CDE) has been making calls to increase the minimum sum for FDWs' PAI. All new changes to the PAI will take effect from 1 October this year.

DEFINITION OF COVERAGE

According to an MOM media release issued on the same day, the revised PAI will also cover all sudden and unforeseen incidents that result in the death or permanent disability of FDWs to ensure they receive standardised protection.

MOM added that insurers will not be permitted to impose additional "conditions, exceptions or exclusions, except those specified by the Controller for Work Passes such as pre-existing conditions or suicide.

"Today, different insurers provide different coverage for PAI, with some insurers taking a narrower definition of accidents and imposing more exclusions. As a result, some FDWs receive compensation for certain accidents, while others may not, even though the circumstances are the same," said MOM.

COVERAGE AND REPRESENTATION

MOM added that the PAI coverage period must now be from the date the FDW first arrives in Singapore to the date she returns to her country or, in the case where she is changing employers, to the date her new work permit is issued.

FDWs or their legal representatives will also now be allowed to file claims directly with insurers. If an FDW or her next-of-kin is unable to do so, MOM will appoint a representative to act on her behalf.

ADVOCATING FOR FDWS

Responding to the changes in a statement, CDE Chairman Yeo Guat Kwang said they are happy that MOM has heeded their calls to increase the minimum insurance sum.

"Since the last PAI review in 2008, the starting salaries of FDWs have increased quite significantly from an average of $300 in 2012 to about $550 in 2016. This warrants a corresponding increase in PAI coverage due to the rising cost of living in source countries fuelled by inflation, and in the event of any unfortunate accidents, the family of FDWs will receive greater financial support with the larger insurance payout," said Mr Yeo.

He added that the centre welcomes the move to standardise the PAI coverage, duration and the enhancement to allow FDWs and legal representatives to file claims directly with insurers.

He is now urging the Government to consider increasing the $15,000 medical insurance coverage to help employers cope with medical costs should their FDWs come down with a serious illness.

Celebrating May Day

The May Day celebrations for domestic employees organised by the Labour Movement sees some 1,000 participants gather at the Youth Park @ Somerset.

Domestic employees were treated to a day out, spending the hours bonding and interacting through various activities and games. The NTUC May Day Domestic Employees Celebration was organised to appreciate domestic employees for their hard work and contributions.

"Domestic employees are part of our working people in Singapore too. Therefore, it is imperative for our Labour Movement to support them on workplace-related issues as well as to look after their needs. We appreciate their efforts in taking care of our homes and family members while we are at work," said NTUC Central Committee member Abdul Samad Abdul Wahab, who is also co-chair of the event organising committee.

During the celebrations, NTUC President Mary Liew and other NTUC Central Committee members were present to interact with FDWs and give out 30 appreciation cards that were crafted by primary school children.

Family Fun at May Day Fiesta

Some 25,000 union members and their loved ones come together to revel in the festivities at Downtown East.

By **Avelyn Ng**

As part of the Labour Movement's May Day 2017 celebrations, NTUC invited some 25,000 union members, together with their family and friends, to its annual May Day Fiesta on 6 May 2017.

Held at Downtown East, May Day Fiesta 2017 had an exciting line-up of games and entertainment, including stage performances by nEbO and Young NTUC members. One of the event's key highlights was the free entry into the revamped Wild Wild Wet, which has recently doubled its size and added several new attractions. Union members also enjoyed the Fiesta's exclusive offers to Orchid Bowl, eXplorerkid, D'Resort as well as various participating retailers at E!Avenue and E!Hub.

Street performers greeted fiesta-goers and livened the event with eye-opening circus tricks.

The May Day Fiesta 2017 kicked off with a group appearance of Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing, NTUC President Mary Liew and the Central Committee members with the mascots.

Tech-savvy adults dived into virtual realities as they engaged in new-age entertainment.

A child trying her best to score at one of the 20 unique game stalls.

The event attracted people from all walks of life and ages for a day of family bonding.

What's Happening Where

Compiled by **Avelyn Ng**

Stock photo

Baby Blessings

Looking to celebrate the arrival of your baby with all your loved ones? Orchid Country Club's 2017 baby shower package for NTUC members may just be what you need. There are three tea reception buffet menus at a discounted price of $32 per person for you to choose from. The venue booking comes with a host of freebies such as free flow drinks, fresh floral centrepieces, use of the projector and one night's stay at Orchid Lodge! Your guests too are in for a treat with preferred room rates, shuttle bus service (to and from Yishun MRT), complimentary parking and door gifts.

*LinkPoints can be earned when booking. Halal and vegetarian menus are available. Service charge and taxes apply. For more information, call **6750 2166** or email **s&m@orchidclub.com**.*

Nee Soon Fiesta 3Ten Run

OCC 3Ten Run is making a comeback for the third consecutive year under a different name – Nee Soon Fiesta 3Ten Run. The renaming marks the first time that Orchid Country Club (OCC) and People's Association will be co-organising the event. The run will be expanding its reach by engaging families and non-golfers to enjoy a night of community running at the breath-taking 27-hole golf course at OCC. After the race, participants can join carnival-like activities at the Race Village just minutes away from OCC. Did we also mention that there will be attractive fitness-related merchandise from participating sponsors in your race packs?

*29 July 2017, 6pm, OCC. Categories: 10km Individual Open (competitive), 5km Fun Run (non-competitive), 1.5km Family Run (recreational). NTUC and union members enjoy promotional rates! For registration, visit **www.3tenrun.com**.*

Play in Doubles

eXplorerkid is now offering 1-for-1 playtime during peak and off-peak periods. There is even a 'Craft Activity Bundle' for children to exercise their creativity. Exclusive to NTUC members till 31 May 2017 only – don't miss it!

*Available at Ang Mo Kio Hub and E!hub Downtown East outlets. Members have to present NTUC Card and printed or mobile coupon at **http://bit.ly/2pDWYlS** to redeem the promotion. Separate charges apply for Adventure Highlands at eXplorerkid @ Downtown East. Website: **www.explorerkid.com**.*

Yes to Entrepreneurship

NTUC's nEbO is organising its 10th edition of Youth Entrepreneurship Symposium (YES)! Mark it down on your calendars today if you are aged 17 to 25 and thinking of starting a business. Themed 'Entrepreneurship As A Career', the event will feature interactive workshops to equip youths with the necessary skills to start their business journey. Speakers will be on hand to share inspiring stories and join a networking session with attendees. YES is also a golden opportunity for students to find part-time and internship positions in start-ups.

*13 - 16 June 2017, 9am – 6pm, NUS School of Business. nEbO member: $25, Public: $35 (inclusive of nEbO membership and Wild Wild Wet's Premium Membership). Register at **www.nebo.sg** before 4 June 2017.*

Keeping it Fair in Freelancing

NTUC goes full steam ahead with a trade fair to help the growing freelancing and self-employed pool.

By **Jonathan Tan**

If you are a freelancer or are self-employed, you join part of a growing group that currently numbers 200,000. Given that background, the Labour Movement organised its second trade fair to support and push for greater recognition of the group as professional talents.

Highlighting this commitment, NTUC Assistant Director-General and Director, Freelancers and Self-Employed Unit Ang Hin Kee said: "The Labour Movement hopes to lend strength to the capabilities of our freelancers, and acknowledge them as professional talents. We hope to build a platform which provides freelancers and service buyers with the required resources and contacts to further boost business and collaborative opportunities.

"At the same time, we leverage our partners who can share their expertise and experiences to help educate the various stakeholders on fair trade and how to better make use of this growing talent pool."

Themed 'Fair in Freelancing', the trade fair at the NTUC Centre on 5 May 2017 attracted more than 300 participants made up of freelancers, service buyers and service aggregators.

PROMOTING FAIR TRADE

In a special segment on Government procurement practices, representatives from the Ministry of Finance were on hand to share the considerations freelancers should take note of. This was complemented by a series of dialogues and workshops on best practices that promote fair and responsible trading between freelancers and service buyers.

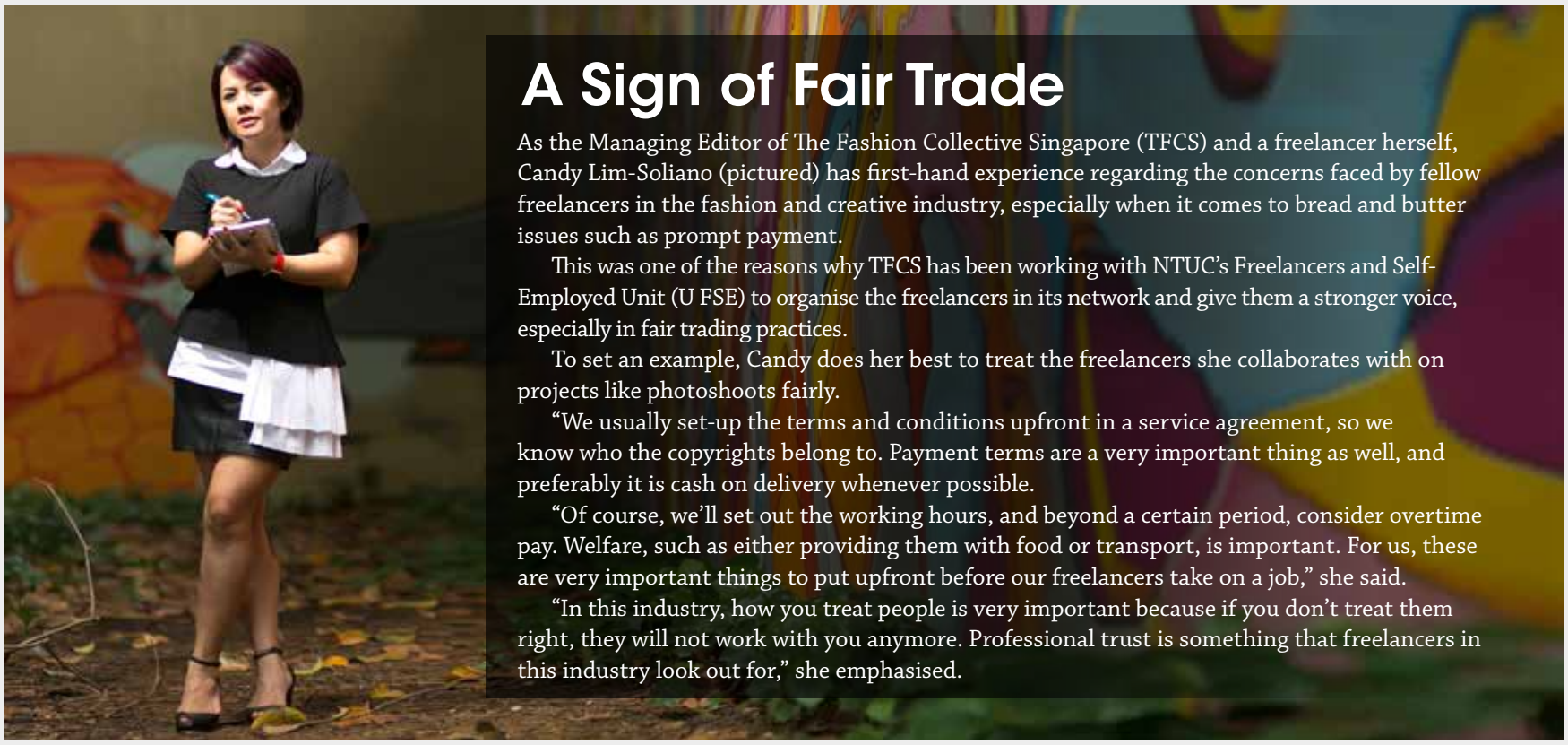
When asked what fair trade with freelancers looks like, Mr Ang said: "That would see freelancers competing equally with other vendors for jobs that are being put out there. Companies and organisations that procure their services will treat them no differently from vendors, pay them no differently and comply with rules of payment in the same way. This is something that we are working towards."

He added that unless there is fairness in the treatment of freelancers, good quality freelancers may leave what they are doing. In the long-term, the quality of freelancers available will deteriorate.

WORD FROM THE STREET

Sharing his impressions, freelance Web Developer Terence Pek said: "This is a very good development for me because it tells hirers that freelancers are an option and pushes them towards acknowledging us as a contingent workforce. Having the backing of NTUC is good because it helps us get exposure and recognition. The strength of the fair lies in networking and exchanging ideas, because that is how we grow. Having big players there bring value because we get to pick up new ideas and tips on being a better entrepreneur."

Freelancers keen to find out more about the Freelancers and Self-Employed Unit can visit ***www.ntuc.org.sg/wps/portal/fse/home*** *or email* ***fseu@ntuc.org.sg***.



A Sign of Fair Trade

As the Managing Editor of The Fashion Collective Singapore (TFCS) and a freelancer herself, Candy Lim-Soliano (pictured) has first-hand experience regarding the concerns faced by fellow freelancers in the fashion and creative industry, especially when it comes to bread and butter issues such as prompt payment.

This was one of the reasons why TFCS has been working with NTUC's Freelancers and Self-Employed Unit (U FSE) to organise the freelancers in its network and give them a stronger voice, especially in fair trading practices.

To set an example, Candy does her best to treat the freelancers she collaborates with on projects like photoshoots fairly.

"We usually set-up the terms and conditions upfront in a service agreement, so we know who the copyrights belong to. Payment terms are a very important thing as well, and preferably it is cash on delivery whenever possible.

"Of course, we'll set out the working hours, and beyond a certain period, consider overtime pay. Welfare, such as either providing them with food or transport, is important. For us, these are very important things to put upfront before our freelancers take on a job," she said.

"In this industry, how you treat people is very important because if you don't treat them right, they will not work with you anymore. Professional trust is something that freelancers in this industry look out for," she emphasised.

Labour-related Questions and Answers

Ministries respond to questions raised by Labour Members of Parliament (MP) on several issues on 8 May 2017.

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

CPF EDUCATION SCHEME

Expanding the use of the CPF Education Scheme to include all programmes beyond subsidised diplomas and degrees must be approached with caution.

Manpower Minister Lim Swee Say was responding to Labour MP Patrick Tay's question on whether the Government would consider expanding the scheme to all programmes at approved educational institutions and not limit it to only full-time subsidised diploma and degree courses.

"The primary purpose of CPF is to support retirement, healthcare and housing needs. When the CPF was expanded to support education in 1989, it was designed as a loan scheme and confined to only firstly, full-time, secondly subsidised, and thirdly diploma and degree programmes offered by local approved educational institutions.

"Students have to repay in cash the amount withdrawn plus interest into the CPF member's Ordinary Account so as to restore members' CPF savings for their retirement needs. This cautious approach is to safeguard the fundamental objectives of the CPF," said Minister Lim.

MINIMUM AGE TO BE LICENSED

Regardless of age, a security officer must meet the same training standards and be certified before being deployed, said Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam.

He was responding to a question posed by Labour MP Zainal Sapari on whether the Ministry will consider allowing only persons aged 18 years and above to apply for the private security officer's licence, as opposed to the current 16 years.

Minister Shanmugam said that the licensing requirement takes into consideration the Employment Act, which states that those aged 16 and above are no longer considered children or young persons.

He added that there are fewer than 10 active security officers below 18 years of age out of over 40,000 and to date, the Police Licensing & Regulatory Department has not received any adverse feedback regarding these officers.

REGISTERED DESIGNS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Designers in Singapore will receive better rights protection for their works and be able to register their new creations more easily with the Registered Designs (Amendment) Bill passed in Parliament, after a second reading.

Changes to the Act include expanding the types of designs that can be registered, designers receiving ownership of their works instead of the commissioning party and streamlining the process for multiple applications.

Rising in support of the amendment, Labour MP Patrick Tay said: "I believe these changes will reduce barriers for smaller players in the market such as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and freelance professionals in the creative and design fields to seek protection of their intellectual property rights and benefit from their designs."

However, he highlighted that as infringement actions must be filed in the High Court, it might prove too costly for small businesses and freelancers.

Responding to this concern, Senior Minister of State (SMS) for Finance and Law Indranee Rajah said this was something the Ministry of Law was looking into and had recently appointed a committee with representatives comprising the judiciary and academia to review Singapore's intellectual property dispute resolution system.

Raising Awareness

Mr Tay also warned that the efforts will come to nothing if the public lacks awareness of their intellectual property rights.

"I, therefore, urge for more to be done to ensure that SMEs and freelancers in the design industry are aware of the availability of such protection and know when, how and where to seek enforcement of their rights," he said.

He also suggested that the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) should work with the Labour Movement to raise designers' awareness of their rights.

In her reply, SMS Indranee said that she welcomes the invitation and will ask IPOS to do so.

BIZ TALK WITH

Wilson Ang

"Any job can be a green job, it is a matter of taking on the mindset towards being sustainable…" says Global Compact Network Singapore (GCNS) Executive Director Wilson Ang. GCNS is one of the latest NTUC U Associates.

Story and Photo by **Jonathan Tan**

"The misconception is that sustainability is just about the environment. And when people talk about CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility], the misconception is that it is philanthropy, but it is not," said Global Compact Network Singapore (GCNS) Executive Director Wilson Ang.

Besides environmental consciousness, Wilson explained that corporate sustainability also has a large social aspect which includes fair and responsible labour practices, anti-corruption and human rights.

"The idea is that businesses can be a force for good and can influence change. What we try to push for is how they can do things in a more responsible manner as part of a community," he said.

According to Wilson, as more companies go towards being more sustainable, there is a need to prepare the people for the new job opportunities that will emerge. To effectively reach out to working people and achieve this, GCNS has partnered NTUC U Associate.

MOULDING THE FUTURE

GCNS signed a memorandum of understanding with NTUC U Associate in April 2017, making it the 59th partner in the network. The launch also saw the introduction of two sectoral initiatives to prepare working Singaporeans for available jobs in the market.

The first, the Sustainability Internship Programme, was developed following GCNS's participation in the Green Jobs Symposium organised by Young NTUC in 2016. The programme aims to bridge the gap where young workers have the qualifications but lack the necessary experience to secure jobs.

The second initiative, the Sustainability Professional Programme, was co-developed by the association, NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and U Associate. Targeted at mid-career professionals, the programme consists of 10 days of classroom training and four weeks of mentorship or attachment to a company.

Both programmes are scheduled to start in the second half of 2017.

LEVERAGING THE NETWORK

GCNS is also hoping to leverage the Labour Movement's U Startup network and the small- and medium-sized companies in the U SME network to share how the adoption of more sustainable business practices can be useful.

Citing how being sustainable need not mean expensive changes, Wilson said: "Things like making sure your labour practices are right, treating your people fairly, giving people equal access and at the same time, making sure your resources are well managed will save you money and help in staff retention."

NEW JOB POTENTIAL

Citing a growing awareness of sustainability around the world, Wilson shared how Singapore has been driving sustainable development through its Sustainability Singapore Blueprint 2015 which details the national vision for a sustainable and liveable city.

According to him, this opens up new opportunities for jobs in the area of sustainable products and services, such as in the development of green buildings and solar panels. Another area is in processes, where professionals look at how to help a company develop more efficient processes that are both socially and environmentally responsible.

To do well in such a role, Wilson said that critical thinking, being innovative and the ability to communicate will be most important.

"Singaporeans need to be prepared to go beyond to the regional market because there are only so many companies in Singapore. And the region does look at Singapore as a beacon of light with such expertise and that's why we want to prepare our young Singaporeans to be world ready as well," said Wilson.

To find out more about NTUC U Associate, visit ***www.ntuc.org.sg/uassociate/***.

INSIDER'S GUIDE

Global Compact Network Singapore

Established: 2005

Why: To help corporate sustainability, GCNS provides a one-stop concierge service for businesses to begin, deepen and broaden their sustainability journey.

Became an NTUC U Associate in: Apr 2017

Did You Know: GCNS is the Singapore chapter of the United Nations Global Compact network and promotes the 10 universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, anti-corruption and the environment.

www.csrsingapore.org/c/

Everything Sports

Congratulations to The Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union for being crowned Top Union for the sixth year running at U Games 2016/2017! Other unions were not left too far behind, with United Workers of Electronics & Electrical Industries and Healthcare Services Employees' Union going in for a close fight for second and third places respectively.

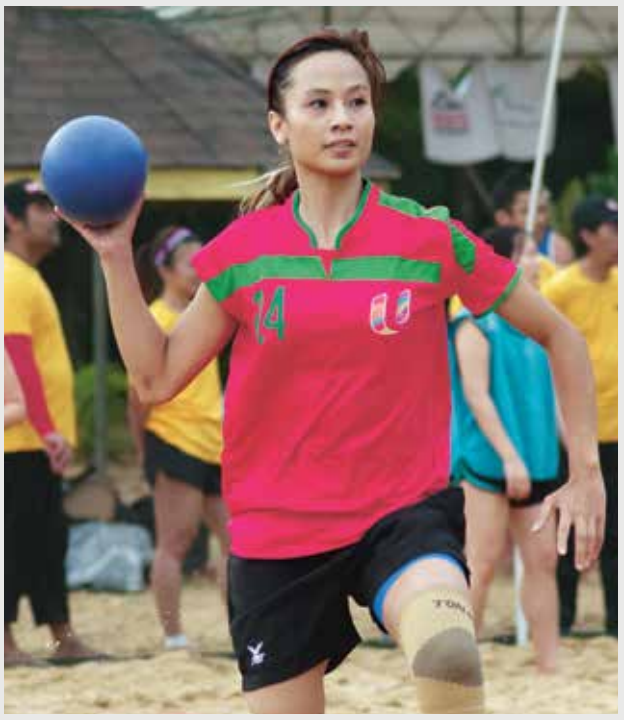
By **Shukry Rashid**

U GAMES 2016/2017 Leaderboard

Position	Union	Points
1	The Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union	2830
2	United Workers of Electronics & Electrical Industries	2190
3	Healthcare Services Employees' Union	2150
4	Singapore Teachers' Union	1910
5	Amalgamated Union of Public Employees	1520
6	DBS Staff Union	1280
7 (joint)	Attractions, Resorts & Entertainment Union	1190
7 (joint)	National Transport Workers' Union	1190
9	Housing and Development Board Staff Union	1130
10 (joint)	Port Officers' Union	1120
10 (joint)	Union of Telecoms Employees of Singapore	1120

6 Things to Know about U Games 2016/2017

1. Into its ninth year, the U Games 2016/2017 season saw a total of 13 sports being played by 45 unions, with some 7,700 members participating in the games.
2. Futsal 5-A-Side saw 23 corporate teams participating.
3. 112 players forming 16 teams took part in the Mixed Netball event.
4. New corporate categories were also introduced to bring union and associate members closer together through sports.
5. Badminton saw 124 teams from 23 unions participating.
6. U Golf 27 Holes Championship saw close to 100 golfers from 16 different organisations teeing off.

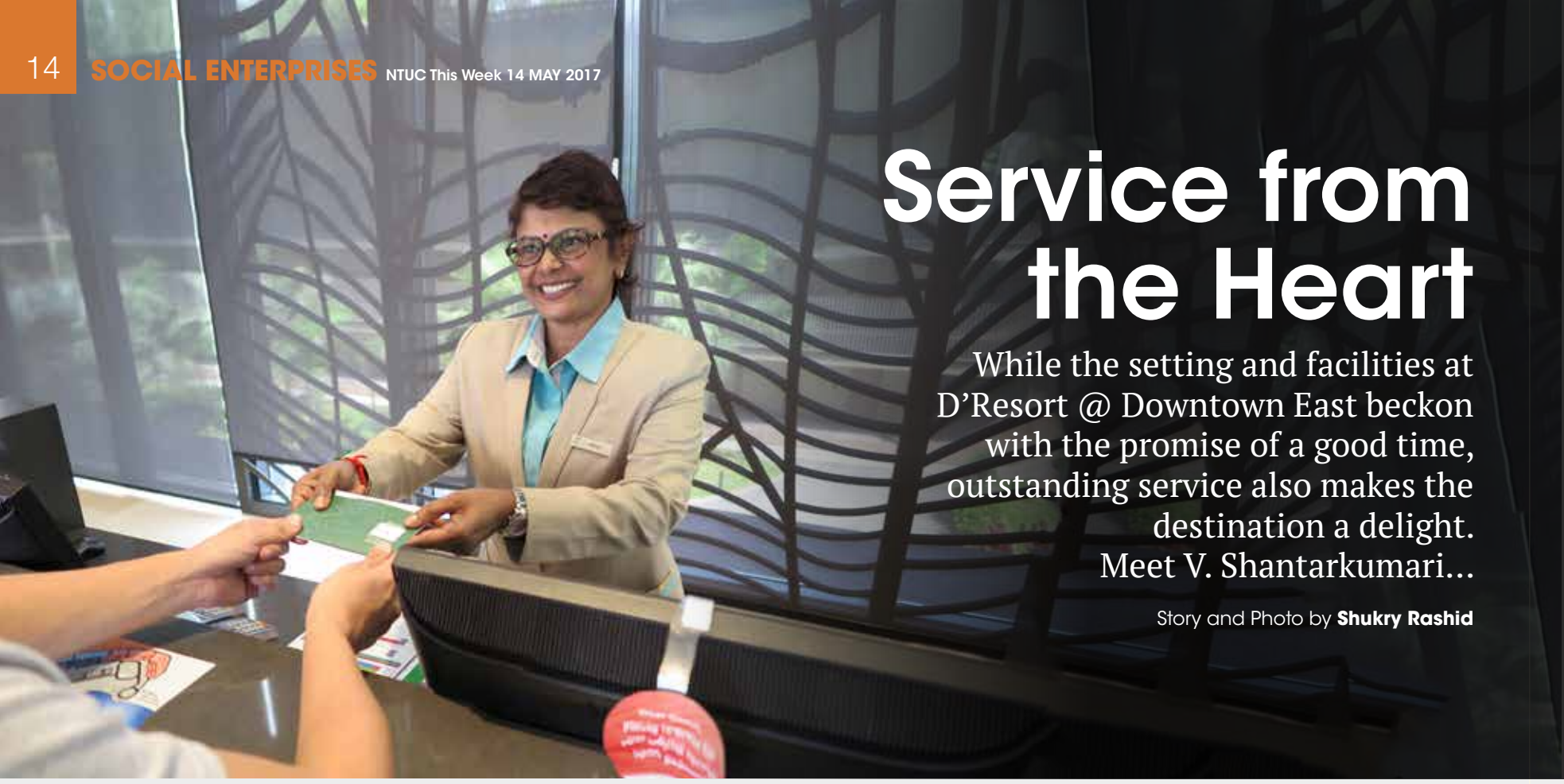


Rallying Members

Singapore Teachers' Union (STU) sent teams to 12 of the 13 games in the U Games 2016/2017, eventually reaching fourth overall placing among the unions. This is a big jump from their 10th place in the 2015/2016 season. We talk to STU member Jean Chia, 34, whose efforts went some way to make it all possible.

Top photo: Jean (middle, in light blue) with her fellow teammates.
Bottom photo: Jean receiving a trophy for coming in first in the recent U Run.

- To rally more members to participate, Jean started writing in STU's newsletter three years ago about her experience in U Sports' competitions.
- A Physical Education teacher for Jurong West Primary School, Jean participated in six of the 12 games that STU participated in.
- Jean was also U Sports' Sportswoman of the year in the previous two seasons. Her personal motto is 'To live and inspire', and she came in first for the recent U Run.
- Jean said: "Members can find out that sports is a way to a healthy lifestyle, to ensure that they live happily and healthily. I believe in spreading this message of enjoying sports and making more friends."
- STU participated in 12 games, sending in two teams for a few of the games. In previous years, they could only participate in two to three games with only one team per game.
- STU achieved podium finishes for netball, basketball and soccer.



Service from the Heart

While the setting and facilities at D'Resort @ Downtown East beckon with the promise of a good time, outstanding service also makes the destination a delight. Meet V. Shantarkumari...

Story and Photo by **Shukry Rashid**

Mdm Gopal, in her 60s, decided to check into the D'Resort @ Downtown East last year. Unfortunately for her, there were minor upgrading works near the room she was staying in, causing her terrible headaches.

She called the front desk to give feedback and 53-year-old Assistant Guest Services Manager V. Shantarkumari, affectionately known as Shanta, was there immediately to attend to her. Shanta suggested a room change for Mdm Gopal, which the lady agreed to.

As the new room was a distance away, Shanta offered to help Mdm Gopal move. She declined as her children were arriving soon to help her. Shanta instead offered them a buggy ride to ease the shift.

Shanta later found out that not only was Mdm Gopal suffering from headaches, she also had a low blood count condition, among other health complications, which caused her to faint easily and have difficulty waking up in the morning.

GOING BEYOND

Knowing Mdm Gopal's health condition, whenever Shanta was on duty, she would pay frequent visits to Mdm Gopal in her room, or she would text or call her to ensure that everything was fine. Shanta also offered to accompany Mdm Gopal to the clinic if she ever needed it.

Despite the initial problems with her stay, Mdm Gopal was so pleased with Shanta's and D'Resort's hospitality that she extended her stay to nine days from the initial five. Mdm Gopal said in a compliment letter to D'Resort: "Shanta is an asset to D'Resort and I thank you for hiring such staff."

Since NTUC Club was launched in 1985, it has been delivering affordable lifestyle options to union members and their families. Three years later in 1988, they opened a resort in Pasir Ris.

In 2015, the resort was renamed to D'Resort after it was refreshed with better facilities.

BECOMING A STAR

Shanta was recently awarded the Singapore Hotel Association's (SHA) Excellent Service Awards (EXSA) Outstanding STAR award – the highest honour in the non-hotel category.

This is a big feat, considering that the hospitality industry was not something Shanta ever considered when she first started working.

She began working for NTUC Club 20 years ago as a part-time cleaner and rose through the ranks in the housekeeping department. When she was offered a job as a duty manager at the front office, she accepted it without hesitation.

"I like to communicate and interact with people and serve the community. Whatever job I'm in, I ensure that I put my fullest and do it with my heart," explained Shanta.

She also said that with quality services and hospitality, guests are bound to spread the word and promote the company to others.

A PERSONAL FRIEND

Shanta is more than just a staff serving guests at the front desk – she has become personal friends with many regulars at D'Resort.

Many guests will personally call her to check if she will be working on a particular day, and they would look forward to her hospitality.

Shanta acknowledges that she would not be where she is today if it were not for her employers who believed in her potential and gave her plenty of opportunities to grow in her career.

Her advice to others keen to join the hospitality industry: "You must have the passion to serve the guests and the community. Besides that, also know your guests. Each guest is a person with a different character and expectations."

GOOD TO KNOW

Winning Staff

Besides Shanta, 219 other staff from NTUC Club were also recently awarded the SHA's EXSA Silver, Gold and Star awards. Beyond the national EXSA award, NTUC Club also holds its very own STAR Awards every year to appreciate and recognise staff who continue to render outstanding service.

NTUC THIS WEEK

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ANDROID

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Future Outlook:
Start Imagining Today!

Vertical farming, a car vending machine, and a video ATM … *Look out for more in this regular column.*

By **Fawwaz Baktee**

Moveable Farm

Perhaps just a little sort of a moveable feast, the Mashamba Skyscraper is a new possibility to bring the green revolution to poverty-stricken spots. The brainchild of Polish designers Pawel Lipiński and Mateusz Frankowski, the verticle farm, which looks like a building with honeycombed rooms and uses a small amount of land, was designed to be used across sub-Saharan Africa.

The structure is a fertile place for farmers to grow their produce while the ground floor becomes an open-air market for selling and buying the harvest. The skyscraper can also be used as an educational centre where farmers learn from each other about different agricultural techniques.

Drone decks can also be used to transport food between the levels. Because the structure is modular, levels can be added when needed and should there be a need, the revolutionary farm can be disassembled and moved to another area.

Well, we believe this could be the first step to help solve world hunger.

Video Bank Teller

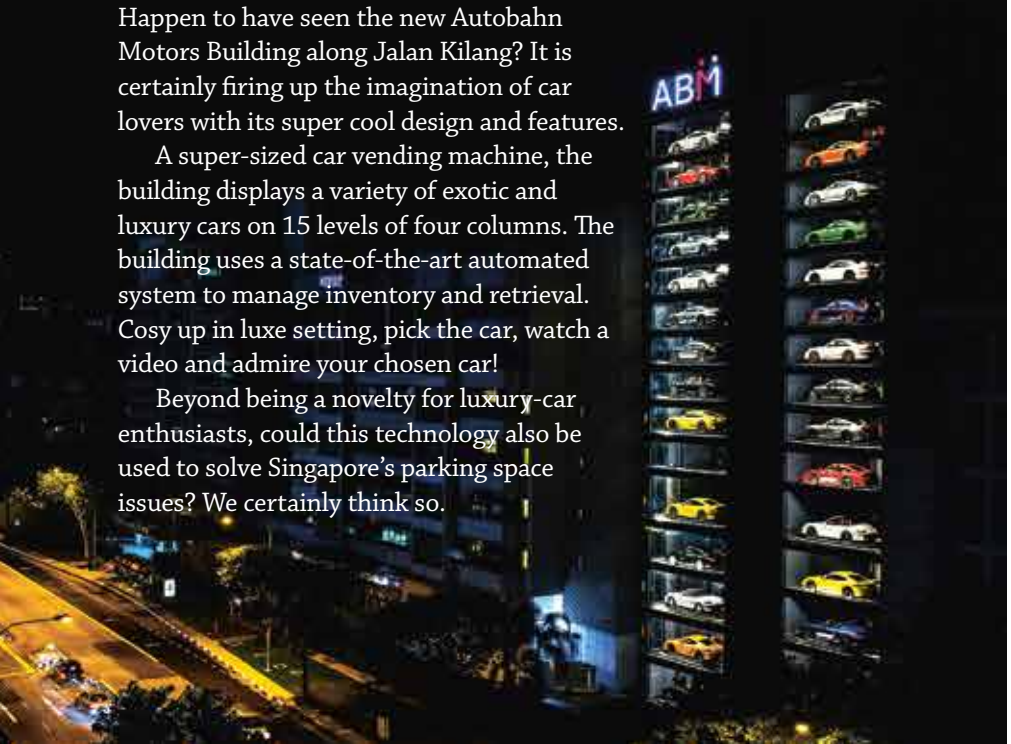
ATMs are changing their faces and the way they work with you. Forget about long queues, customers fiddling around with the buttons and check out DBS/POSB's new video teller machines (VTMs) that bring more services to you compared to the traditional cousins.

Available 24/7 at nine locations across Singapore, the VTMs provide services such as instant dispensing of Internet banking security tokens and debit cards, as well as handling balance enquiries and change of particulars.

To use the machine, you will need your Identity Card or Passport, your ATM card for verification, as well as your mobile phone for more complex transactions.

Don't worry if you still like doing things the old fashion way – customer service officers are available daily via webcam from 8.30am to 12am.

Matchbox Perfect in Real Size!



Happen to have seen the new Autobahn Motors Building along Jalan Kilang? It is certainly firing up the imagination of car lovers with its super cool design and features.

A super-sized car vending machine, the building displays a variety of exotic and luxury cars on 15 levels of four columns. The building uses a state-of-the-art automated system to manage inventory and retrieval. Cosy up in luxe setting, pick the car, watch a video and admire your chosen car!

Beyond being a novelty for luxury-car enthusiasts, could this technology also be used to solve Singapore's parking space issues? We certainly think so.

Snapshots

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

Compiled by **Jonathan Tan** and **Ramesh Subbaraman**

Women @ Work

NTUC's Legal Services Department recently organised its first LawWorks Legal Primer for 2017 titled 'Women @ Work' together with The Law Society of Singapore at the NTUC Centre.

The workshop saw guest speaker Malathi Das, a director at Joyce A. Tan & Partners LLC, share essential information such as women's rights and entitlements under the law which can help them achieve a better work-life balance and empower them should they encounter undesirable behaviour at the workplace.

As part of the e-Law Works Pocket Series of online resources, a 'Women @ Work' guide with legal resources for working women was also launched during the workshop. The guide can be downloaded here: **http://bit.ly/2r4eKAI**.

*The next legal clinic for NTUC union members offering advice on personal matters has been scheduled for 15 June 2017. Interested members can email **lawworks@ntuc.org.sg** for more information or call **8444 6209** to register.*

FairPrice: Keeping Milk Formula Prices Affordable

In support of the Government's call to address the rising cost of infant milk formula, NTUC FairPrice has come out to help parents cope by keeping prices affordable.

Besides regular promotions and rebates through loyalty programmes such as LinkPoints, FairPrice also stocks more than 150 varieties of infant formula from different brands, formulations and pack sizes to give parents a range of choices to suit their needs.

Needy families with young children aged between 6 months and 6 years can also count on support from the NTUC FairPrice Foundation-CDC Milk Fund which disburses vouchers for the purchase of any brand of infant formula at FairPrice outlets.

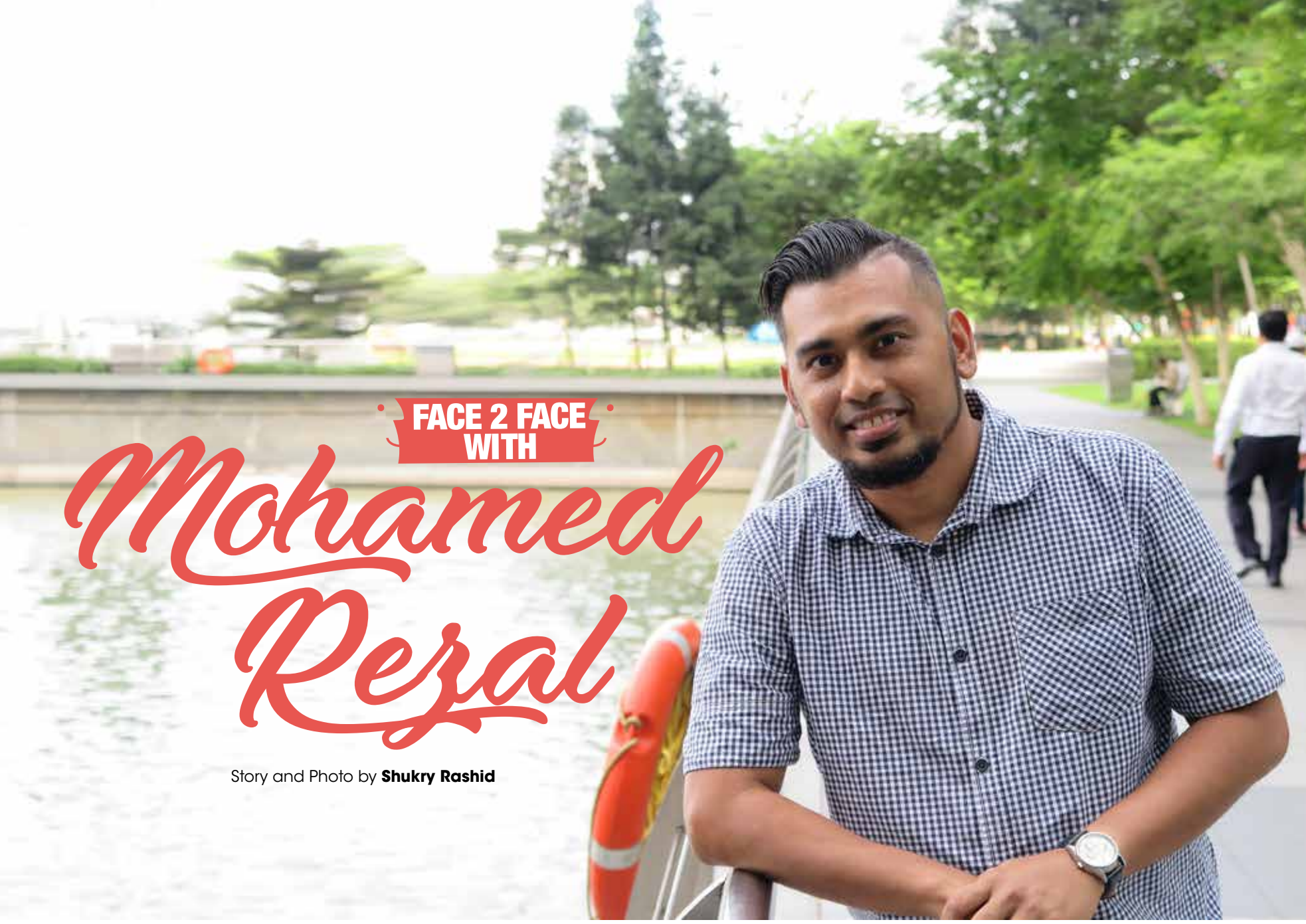
"The community can be assured that FairPrice is continually looking at ways to ensure daily essentials such as infant formula remain available and affordably priced for all," said FairPrice CEO Seah Kian Peng.

New NTWU Office In Jurong Port

Union members at Jurong Port now have a new office to call their own. It was jointly opened by National Transport Workers' Union (NTWU) Executive Secretary Melvin Yong and Jurong Port's CEO Ooi Boon Hoe on 7 April 2017.

"I spoke to the CEO of Jurong Port and he said the membership here has potential to grow. Manpower has grown from about 400 to 1,000 in the recent one year. The CEO suggested that the NTWU office can be the central location where we can step up our recruitment as well," said Mr Yong.

The NTWU branch at Jurong Port currently has 237 members.



FACE 2 FACE WITH

Mohamed Rezal

Story and Photo by **Shukry Rashid**

If you think the Labour Movement does not have a superhero in its midst, think again. Currently living on a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), 36-year-old Mohamed Rezal Mohd Yusof's condition is akin to Iron Man – a man with a 'broken heart' who still chooses to be selfless and stand up for others.

Currently the Public Utilities Board Employees' Union (PUBEU) assistant general treasurer and a senior assistant engineer for PUB, Rezal may have a lot going on in his personal life but his fellow workers' concerns are always one of his top priorities.

***NTUC This Week*: How did you start out in PUBEU?**

Mohamed Rezal: I joined PUB in 2008 and immediately joined PUBEU. In 2013, I was asked to be a delegate for my branch as I was told that I am a vocal person, and often voiced concerns for my fellow workers. In the 2014 union elections, I was nominated to be an executive council (ExCo) member. Then in 2015, I had a heart attack, which was a turning point in my life. But I continued my union work. In the most recent union elections last year, I was promoted to be PUBEU assistant general treasurer and chairman of my branch.

Can you tell us more about your heart attack incident?

When I joined the union, I was already very keen to find out what the union was all about. When I was given the chance to represent my colleagues in the ExCo, I went for it. But on 20 March 2015, while I was at work in the morning, I had a major heart attack. My chest was in pain and I had cold sweat. My colleague immediately drove me to the hospital. When the doctor put some medicine under my tongue for the heart attack, I blacked out. That was when my heart stopped completely. I was revived only on the third resuscitation attempt. As I was heavily sedated, I only realised what was happening three weeks later and the doctors told me that my heart was only functioning at 17 per cent capacity. The doctors added that if I wanted to continue living, I must be on an LVAD while I wait for a heart transplant.

How did the incident change your life?

Being on an LVAD, I had to make many changes in my life as there are limitations to what I can do. As the LVAD is equipped with a mechanical pump, I can't get wet, not even be in the rain. I also must clean the dressing at the opening in my stomach, and charge the LVAD's battery every day. These are all time-consuming, but I got used to it after a while. Life has to carry on and I continued with my work. I also want to be an inspiration to people, that we mustn't give up on life no matter what comes. I'm also glad that I inspired my colleagues to lead a healthier lifestyle and take better care of their health. In January this year, I also received great news from my wife that she is pregnant. We're expecting a daughter in late-August.

What keeps you going with union work?

When I was hospitalised, seeing other patients on LVAD leading their lives normally made me even more determined to carry on with my union. Why must I lose hope? I was given a second chance in life, I must make full use of it and continue contributing to my union and organisation. Our branch's Collective Agreement is expiring in September and we are currently negotiating with our management for better employment terms and benefits such as overtime salary and risk allowances. With more responsibilities being imposed on workers, we found that there are some things that should be addressed. The management knows of our concerns, but they also have restrictions. We have to consider the budget they have and we have to compromise with them.

INSIDER'S GUIDE

pubEU

Public Utilities Board Employees' Union

Date of Registration: 9 September 1999

Date of Affiliation to NTUC: 9 September 1999

Membership: 2,950

Did You Know: As 27 per cent of PUB's workforce are mature employees above the age of 55, re-employment is one of the key sources of recruitment at PUB. With the support from PUBEU, PUB re-employs retired employees who possess the required skills and competencies for the job vacancies to be filled. Employees may continue in the same job they were in prior to their retirement or be redeployed to a new job with a different scope and different responsibilities, depending on the needs of the organisation.