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THE STRAITS TIMES

— CELEBRATING 170 YEARS, SINCE 1845 —

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015

Mr Lee's last trip to Parliament today

Public can pay
last respects
while body is
lying in state

By ZAKIR HUSSAIN
DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR

THE casket of Singapore's founding father, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, will be moved from the Istana to Parliament House this morning for the start of four days of lying in state, with thousands expected to pay their respects to the former prime minister.

In the highest honour accorded to a leader, the State flag will be draped over the casket, with the crescent and stars lying over the head and close to the heart of Mr Lee, who died on Monday, aged 91. Eight officers will then transfer the casket onto a gun carriage.

A ceremonial foot procession will be led by Mr Lee's elder son, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and his wife, Ms Ho Ching; daughter Lee Wei Ling; younger son Lee Hsien Yang and his wife, Ms Lim Suet Fern; and seven grandchildren, for about 70m.

The gun carriage procession will travel the 2km route from Orchard Road to Parliament House, passing through Bras Basah Road and North Bridge Road.

The Chief of Defence Force, Commissioner of Police, Speaker of Parliament, as well as PM Lee and the family will then receive the casket before it is transferred onto the bier for the lying in state.

Members of the public can pay their respects from 10am to 8pm from today to Saturday.

Queues will start at the promenade along the Singapore River, next to Parliament House.

Condolence cards will also be available for well-wishers to pen tributes, and those with flowers may lay them at condolence boards along the promenade.

Yesterday, some 4,000 visitors paid their respects at Sri Temasek, the official residence of the Prime Minister in the Istana grounds, where a private wake had been held since Monday.

PM Lee was also presented with a new orchid, named the Aranda Lee Kuan Yew, by NParks chief executive Kenneth Er and National Orchid Gardens nursery manager David Lim.

Outside the Istana gates in Orchard Road, more than 21,000 people turned up to leave flowers and cards, and pen messages in Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English on condolence cards that were then displayed on memorial boards.

President Tony Tan Keng Yam dropped by at around 12.30pm to thank well-wishers, and PM Lee stepped out briefly at around 2pm to view the messages and thank those who were there.

Businessman R. Veerappan, 54, who left a Singapore flag and a condolence message from his family, said: "I brought the flag here



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(Left) The line of people
waiting to pen their
tributes outside the
Istana snakes all the way
to Plaza Singapura at
around 8pm yesterday.
ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

(Below) Earlier in the
day, PM Lee greeted the
public outside the Istana.
ST PHOTO: CHONG ZI LIANG

(Below, left) A woman in
the crowd wiping tears
from her eyes.
ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM



because the flag only means something today, thanks to the country that Mr Lee built."

Mr Jailani Sanwor signed a condolence card in Malay with the message: "May God have mercy on his soul and place him among the ranks of the righteous."

Some could not hold back tears, like student Wong Si Min, 17, who had to be consoled by a friend. "I've never met Mr Lee but learnt about him through history classes. He is a role model and we wouldn't have a comfortable life without Mr Lee," she said.

Thousands of well-wishers al-

so turned up at 10 community sites set up by the People's Association across Singapore. Another eight tribute sites will be operating from today.

Many expressed thanks to Mr Lee for shaping various aspects of life in Singapore, from the health-care system to well-looked-after public housing estates.

Grassroots leader Jefferson Neo, who was at a Choa Chu Kang tribute site, recalled how he was a Secondary 2 student in 1976 when Mr Lee came to his school, Tiong Bahru Secondary, as part of the Keep Singapore Clean campaign

and demonstrated leadership by example.

"He visited the school, and not only that, he picked up a broom and swept alongside us students as well," he said.

Former opposition MP Chiam See Tong said Mr Lee always took a strategic, long-term view of Singapore and added: "He will live on in history, remaining for future generations the symbol of Singapore's success. His absence from our 50th National Day Parade later this year will be particularly poignant to us."

Two key organisations Mr Lee

set up and shaped – the People's Association and the National Trades Union Congress – held ceremonies to honour Mr Lee at their headquarters.

Tributes continued to pour in from world leaders, and United States President Barack Obama spoke with PM Lee to express his condolences.

The White House said: "The President recognised founding Prime Minister Lee's remarkable leadership and lasting contributions, not just to Singapore's development, but also to the region's dynamism."

The state funeral for Mr Lee will be held on Sunday afternoon.

Last night, PM Lee posted a photo of Sri Temasek on Facebook saying: "We never lived here, but my parents spent many happy evenings here with the children and grandchildren. Tomorrow, my father's body will leave Sri Temasek for the last time."

He added: "On behalf of my family, I would like to thank all who have paid their last respects to my father, whether at Sri Temasek, at the tribute centres all over the island or online."

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Plane crashes in remote French Alps; all 150 on board feared dead

EYNE-LES-ALPES (France) – An Airbus operated by Luf-

thansa's Germanwings budget airline crashed in a remote area of the French Alps yesterday, and all 150 on board were feared dead.

"A black box that we found a few hours after the crash will immediately be examined to help the investigation move forward quickly," French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve told reporters.

The crash does not appear to have been caused by a terror attack, the White House said, adding that United States officials

stand ready to help investigate.

French President Francois Hollande said he believed none of those on board the A-320 had survived.

Germanwings confirmed its Flight 4U 9525 from Barcelona to Dusseldorf crashed with 144 passengers and six crew on board.

French aviation authority Direction Generale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC) said the plane did not issue a distress call. Air traffic controllers issued the Mayday call.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she will travel to the crash site today. She called the crash a shock that had plunged Germany, France and Spain into "deep mourning".

Germanwings said it believed 67 German nationals were on board. Spain's Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said 45 passengers had Spanish names.

During a press conference, Germanwings said the plane fell into

a steep descent which lasted eight minutes, and that it lost contact with French air traffic control at an altitude of about 1,830m.

Weather in the area was reported to be fine, with light winds.

The wreckage of the aircraft was located by a French military helicopter near the town of Prads-Haute-Bléone, according to Mr Eric Heraud, a spokesman in Paris for the DGAC.

"It is going to take days to recover the victims, then the de-

bris," senior police officer Jean-Paul Bloy told Reuters.

The accident occurred in an alpine region known for skiing, hiking and rafting, but which is hard for rescue services to reach.

It was the first crash of a large passenger plane on French soil since the Concorde disaster just outside Paris nearly 15 years ago.

Airbus confirmed that the Germanwings plane was 24 years old. REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE ■ TOP OF THE NEWS A1

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ISTANA: FAMILY WAKE

PM, President visit tribute site at Istana gates

They read condolence cards, speak to visitors paying tribute to Mr Lee

By CHONG ZI LIANG and WALTER SIM

SEPARATELY, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and President Tony Tan Keng Yam visited the tribute site near the Istana's main gates yesterday afternoon, to peruse the condolence messages left by Singaporeans.

They also spoke to the people queuing to pay tribute to Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

By 9pm yesterday, 21,000 messages had been placed there during the day, and there were 3,200 more outside the gates of Parliament.

PM Lee, accompanied by his wife Ho Ching, spent about 10 minutes looking at the messages, cards and flowers.

He shook hands with some of the well-wishers, who expressed their sorrow at his father's death.

A few called out in his direction: "Be strong, Mr Lee."

He replied: "Thank you."

Madam Hap Cheng Lay, 71, who shook his hand, told The Straits Times later: "When I saw

him, all the feelings about Mr Lee Kuan Yew just welled up and I couldn't speak."

Madam Hap, who sells drinks at a hawker centre, had arrived at the Istana at 11am to lay flowers and waited three hours to see PM Lee after she heard he would be at the tribute site.

President Tan, who came earlier, spoke to security guard Low Kok Wai, among others.

The 54-year-old, who had travelled more than an hour by bus from Boon Lay, said: "I told the President that without Mr Lee Kuan Yew, we wouldn't be enjoying the high standard of living that we have today."

Dr Tan later updated his Facebook page with photos of his lunchtime visit.

People from all walks of life, including foreigners, continued to pay tribute to Mr Lee, who died on Monday.

Some recalled their personal encounters with Singapore's first Prime Minister.

Mrs Jenny Fleming, 57, brought a photograph taken on a flight to

the Maldives in 1991 that shows herself with Mr Lee Kuan Yew and his late wife, Madam Kwa Geok Choo.

The former Singapore Airlines flight attendant said Mr Lee had no airs and she joked with him like she did with any other passenger.

He had asked for warm beer, she recalled.

"I replied, 'We don't have warm beer but maybe I could send the chief steward to 7 Eleven to buy a can.' He cracked up."

"I'm nobody but he could laugh along with me. It was just such an honour being able to serve him, to be so close to him."

Retiree Woo Sing Yuen's interaction with Mr Lee was at age five. He was accompanying his hawker father, who was enjoying the streets with a pushcart carrying dim sum and char kway teow.

They had run into Mr Lee in Chinatown.

Mr Woo recalled being asked:

"Are you a good Singaporean?"

And he replied: "Yes, sir."

That commitment to Mr Lee has been a driving force in his life, said Mr Woo, who was a regular blood donor and at age 63, is still a marathon runner.

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(Clockwise from far left) PM Lee reading some of the condolence messages left by well-wishers near the gates of the Istana, accompanied by his wife Ho Ching and son Li Hongyi; Mr Dallas Koran, 76, with his wife Tang Lin Foong, 74, were among the thousands who turned up outside the Istana; President Tony Tan Keng Yam reading messages left by Singaporeans from all walks of life as well as foreigners. ST PHOTOS: CHEW SENG KIM

LASTING LEGACY

"I've benefited from Mr Lee's leadership right from the day I was born. He built a country from humble beginnings that is more prosperous, clean and safe than any other place in South-east Asia. I know that my son will have a bright future here. He will have a good education, be judged based on merit and have the same opportunities that others have."

— Mr James Zhang, 32, a hawker who sells satay, was at the Istana with his wife Suwanti Tan, 28, a housewife, and their 18-month-old son Lucas Zhang

WE ARE LIKE MR LEE'S SONS

"We are Singapore citizens and that's like saying we are Mr Lee's sons. I brought the flag here because the flag only means something today, thanks to the country that Mr Lee built."

— Mr R. Veerappan, 54, a businessman who laid a Singapore flag together with a condolence message from his family

A ROLE MODEL

"I've never met Mr Lee but I learnt about him through history classes on moments such as the battle for merger. We came to pay tribute because he is a role model to all of us. I don't think many of my peers realise how hard it was for Singapore to come this far and what we have today is because of him. I hope they will not take it for granted and continue the legacy that he has built for us. I did not really believe it when I first heard the news of his death. It was too shocking, that somebody so great has passed on. I was holding on to the hope that he could celebrate SG50 with us."

— Wong Si Min, 17, who visited the Istana with friend Chan Yu Ping, 17

A GOOD TEACHER

"I thank Mr Lee Kuan Yew for being a nice 'teacher' who has taught Singaporeans many lessons in life. I feel very proud each time I hear the National Anthem. Majulah 'Singapore'!"

— Mr Mohamed Rasheer Ali Shahul Hameed, 59, a cleaner working at a primary school

LESSONS FROM MR LEE

"I've learnt three lessons, thanks to Mr Lee — (i) 'impossible' should not exist in the dictionary; (ii) never assume anything; and (iii) never say 'I don't know' to anything but rather 'I'll check'. I've also learnt the importance of being resilient. Singapore has survived because of him. Even if some policies look harsh, they are implemented for the good of the majority and not for the good of the individual."

— Mr Patrick Tan, 74, an adjunct lecturer in criminology and a freelance certified trainer in hospitality and tourism management. He is a former police officer, and was part of the Lees' team of family bodyguards from 1971 to 1974. He was one of 38 retired police officers who attended the private wake on invitation by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong

LEE KUAN YEW: A tribute

- Get the latest updates in our live blog on the website
- Pen your favourite memories of Mr Lee on the ST Tribute Wall
- Follow us on the ST app in your smartphone and tablet
- Follow @STcom on Twitter and The Straits Times on Facebook



Click on www.straitstimes.com for more on Mr Lee's work, vision and life

Family, friends and old colleagues gather at the Istana to share memories

By CHARISSA YONG

AS THEY gathered to pay their respects to Mr Lee Kuan Yew, retired politicians reminisced about what it had been like to work with Singapore's founding father.

Several who were MPs when Mr Lee was Prime Minister said that though he looked stern, he was a good listener and unafraid to change his mind after hearing a convincing, rational argument.

They were among the 4,000 visitors who paid their respects yesterday at a private family wake for Mr Lee, who died on Monday at the age of 91. Yesterday was the last day of the private wake at the Istana's Sri Temasek, official residence of the Prime Minister.

Mr Chng Hee Kok, an MP from 1984 to 2001, recalled a time he disagreed with Mr Lee over the pace of telecommunications development in developing countries like Vietnam. "He listened to me and then he just kept a bit quiet. I think he was running through his head what I was saying. He accepted it," said Mr Chng.

Mr Lee never let things rest, he added. "When you raise an issue (over lunch with Mr Lee) about the civil service, about the Government, don't be surprised if, a few weeks later, you get a letter from the civil service trying to defend its position and elaborating on what you raised."

"That's what I admired most about him: He listened," he said.

Mr Yatiman Yusof, an MP from 1984 to 2006 and a former senior parliamentary secretary, said Mr Lee was an incisive Prime Minister who asked robust questions.

"He appreciated honesty and frankness no matter how painful, how hard the facts were," he said.

Recalling a time he, Mr Lee,

Mrs Lee and staff shared a lodge in New Zealand and went fishing, Mr Yatiman said they talked of issues Singapore faced. "He listened to you very closely and asked questions until he was satisfied... We were able to give our feedback and our viewpoints."

Former Housing Board chief executive Lio Thai Ker said Mr Lee was a "worrier" who could anticipate problems. He recalled Mr Lee noting certain types of walls would allow heat from sunlight to build up in homes, worrying too much energy would be consumed to cool homes. This, at a time when global warming was not a prominent issue, he noted.

He was good with both the little details and the big picture, said Mr Lio, adding that he was a big thinker and great strategist.

But above all, the MPs said, Mr Lee's mind was always on Singapore.

The wake was attended by more than 5,200 people over two days. Many of yesterday's visitors were delegations from local organisations, including statutory boards such as HDB and the People's Association. Also represented were sovereign wealth fund GIC and Temasek Holdings.

Other past MPs at the wake included former Finance Minister Richard Hu and parliamentary secretary Tang Guan Seng.

Last night was the final night Mr Lee's casket would rest in Sri Temasek. Today, his body will be taken to Parliament House, where it will lie in state until Saturday.

But before the journey, the ceremonial gun carriage bearing the hearse will be driven around the Istana grounds, giving Mr Lee a final tour of the place that had been such a big part of his life.

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(Anti-clockwise from main picture) Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and his wife Ho Ching with young visitors from Hampton Pre-School at Sri Temasek in the Istana yesterday. Others who came to pay their respects included the Lee family's Malay language teacher Amin Sapawi (second from left), UOB chairman emeritus Wee Cho Yaw, former MP and senior parliamentary secretary Yatiman Yusof, former President S R Nathan and his wife, and Minister for National Development Khaw Boon Wan. The private wake was attended by more than 5,200 people over two days. ST PHOTOS: NEO XIAOBIN

New orchid Aranda Lee Kuan Yew in honour of 'Chief Gardener'

A NEW specimen of orchid has been christened the Aranda Lee Kuan Yew in honour of the late former Prime Minister.

The bright golden yellow flower, with a green tinge, is from the same line that yielded one named for his beloved wife, the Vanda Kwa Geok Choo.

The new orchid was presented to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong yesterday in honour of Mr Lee by NParks chief executive Kenneth Er and National Orchid Gardens nursery manager David Lim.

NParks staff have been looking for some time for a suitable orchid hybrid to name after Mr Lee, that would fit his tastes and befit the man who National Development Minister Khaw Boon Wan called Singapore's "Chief Gardener".

Mr Khaw wrote on his blog: "It would have been wonderful if we had the opportunity to present the Aranda Lee Kuan Yew to Mr Lee himself. It was not meant to be. I am certain Mr Lee would have loved the flowers."

He added: "Ironically, Aranda Lee Kuan Yew has just flowered and will remain in flower for the next two to three weeks."

The public can view it in Parliament House when Mr Lee's body lies in state until Saturday.

The hybrid is a cross between a native orchid, the arachnis hookeriana, and an orchid from Hawaii — from the same line as that named after Mr Lee's wife, who died in 2010.

The Aranda Lee Kuan Yew's petals are bright greenish golden yellow with light tessellations



PM Lee shaking hands with National Orchid Gardens nursery manager David Lim as NParks CEO Kenneth Er looks on. Mr Lee was presented with the Aranda Lee Kuan Yew, a bright golden yellow orchid, yesterday. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

and a tinge of white at the base. Each bloom is complemented by a contrasting light brown waxy lip.

Singapore Botanic Gardens manager Teo Chan Seng, 62, said yesterday that Mr Lee had often visited in the evenings, and liked

the fragrant flowers the best.

Every so often, Mr Lee would bring his Chinese language tutor to chat about the flower names in Mandarin. The last time Mr Teo saw him was in early 2012, he said.

CHARISSA YONG

TRIBUTES: A NATION GRIEVES

Finding their own way to remember Mr Lee

People stream to sites islandwide to grieve quietly and express their thanks

By JOHN LUI

IT IS not easy to sum up a life. Madam Imro'ah Dasuki tries. She wants to leave, embarrassed by the tears that come so easily to her. She somehow thinks it is not proper to show emotion.

But she also wants to tell me something, about how one life changed hers.

Born 58 years ago, she grew up poor, in Kampong Darat Nanas, close to Changi Prison. Her father died young.

"My mother had a hard life," she says, with urgency in her voice. Food was scarce, and they scraped a living selling kueh.

Mdm Imro'ah, now a housewife, got to Secondary 4. She wanted her two daughters to go further, to live lives that were easier.

Today, both are graduates of the National University of Singapore and work in major corporations.

She came yesterday to thank Mr Lee Kuan Yew, she says. I ask what for, and like everyone I interviewed, her answer could be

summed up as: Look at my life. Look around you.

She had come to the condolence site in Bedok Central with her granddaughter Natasha Nadira Imran.

On a piece of POSB stationery, in very neat handwriting, the nine-year-old has prepared the few lines she would copy into the commemoration book.

In her best voice, she reads: "He was a giant of a leader when Singapore needed one.... Our successful Singapore is his legacy. He shall be remembered."

Madam Imro'ah seizes her chance to leave, her hand clutching her granddaughter's, as she can remember, and shed her tears in private.

In this white tent, in a scene replayed at several other sites around the island, people are laying flowers, sitting, remembering. Here in Bedok, a few weep openly, but for the most part, people

FEELINGS OF CONCERN

"He was always worried for Singapore, always thinking of Singapore. I wanted him to take life a bit easy."

— Ms Koh Kit Meng, 63, a retired senior secretary

are composed.

They speak of Mr Lee in familiar terms – that he lifted a country by its economic bootstraps, crushed corruption, made the streets safe and clean and green, and forged a nation out of diverse peoples. One man from China respects Mr Lee for helping his country walk the path to prosperity in the 1980s.

Ms Koh Kit Meng, 63, a retired senior secretary, remembers a few key images. Such as when he passed a kiss from his hand to his late wife, Madam Kwa Geok Choo, at her funeral in 2010. She was also

glad when he stepped down as Prime Minister in 1990 to take on an advisory role as Senior Minister.

"He was always worried for Singapore, always thinking of Singapore. I wanted him to take life a bit easy," she says.

Everyone has his or her way of

remembering. For Ms Shirley Tin, 43, a designer, it was to go online. She is here with husband Kong Chee Hoe, a photographer, and two children. She dabs at her eyes.

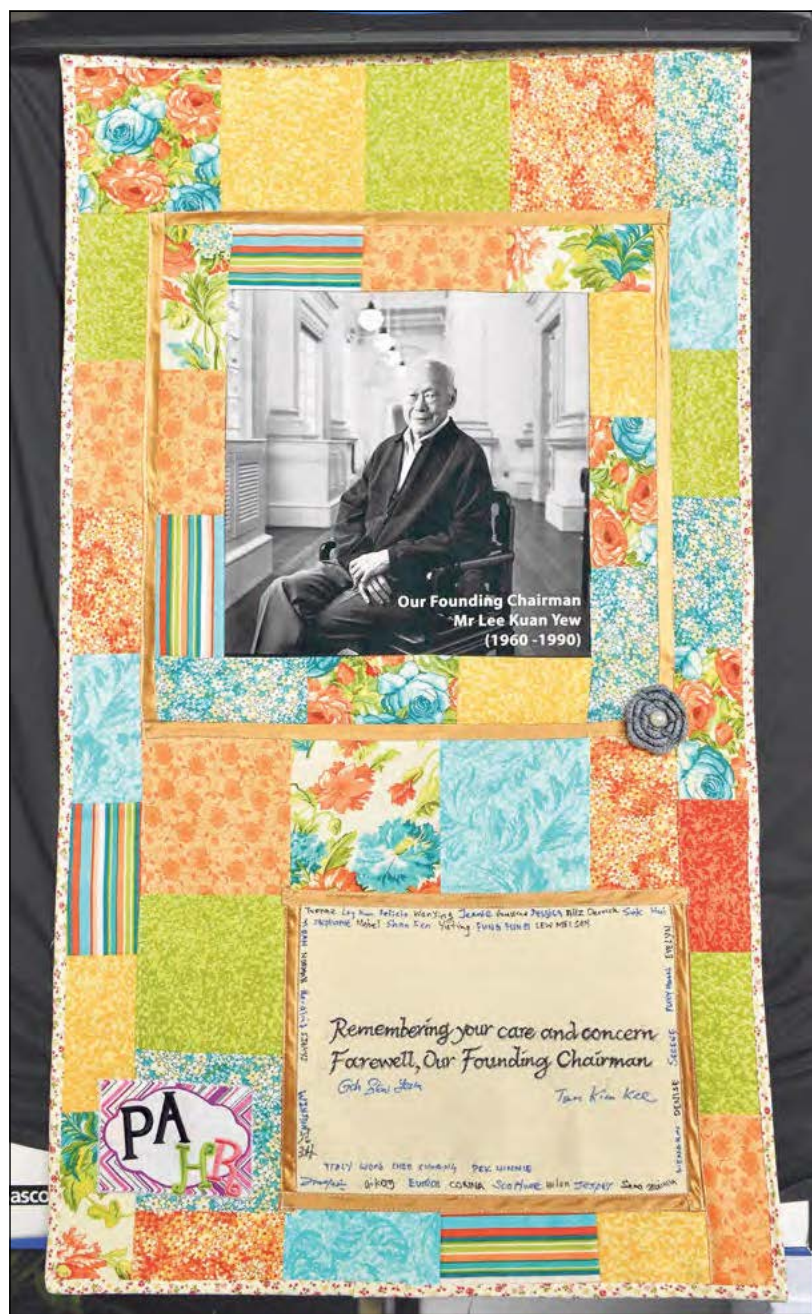
"Last night I watched the YouTube videos. Of him, speaking, to students, to everyone," she says.

In the book, she writes: "Love and respect, for you, beyond words. Chee Hoe, Shirley, Oliver, Sonya."

I see and meet people wearing Panasonic uniforms, from the nearby factory. There are managers on a lunch break from Land Transport Authority. There is a Japanese woman with two children in line to sign the book. There are three mainland Chinese engineers and a public relations executive from India.

Then there are the men and women who hang back outside the tent, looking on, a few with red-rimmed eyes, not wanting to fully participate, but desiring the company of others, united and grieving quietly.

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A personal tribute to Mr Lee Kuan Yew placed at the People's Association headquarters yesterday. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN



Ms Vivian Ng, 31, and her two-year-old son Damien paying their respects to Mr Lee at Tanjong Pagar Community Club yesterday. ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM

‘He cared for the people and gave us a better life’

By PEARL LEE, MIRANDA YEO and SAMANTHA BOH

MADAM Koh Choo Neo had three children, was 20 years old and struggling to make ends meet when she decided to see her MP for help.

She lived in Tanjong Pagar, so she went to see Mr Lee Kuan Yew. "I had no education and no job prospects. He could not give me financial help but he told me to endure, work hard and look forward," said Madam Koh, now 77.

"His words gave me the courage to go on, and that reminder to work hard guided me through the ups and downs in my life."

She was at Tampines Community Plaza yesterday morning and stood in line with other Tampines residents to leave flowers and messages for Singapore's first Prime Minister, who died on Monday.

When her turn came, Madam Koh bowed her head in prayer and then placed a bouquet of lilies on a table in front of Mr Lee's portrait.

"With his effort, all Singaporeans have a home and clean water to drink. I pray that his spirit and soul will rest in heaven," she said.

By mid-afternoon, more than 2,500 people had visited the tribute centre and more than 800 handwritten notes were left on a large board with a portrait of Mr Lee.

Over at Parliament House, sales manager Taffine Tay, 40, showed up in the afternoon, despite having her injured right leg in a cast. Like hundreds of other working adults, she wanted to pen a note to express her feelings.

"Mr Lee did what he had to do for us to enjoy a First World city now," said Madam Tay.

She said she did not always

agree with Mr Lee's style of running Singapore.

She studied in an Australian university and read books that were banned here when she took political science classes.

"I felt at the time that Singapore had many restrictions on freedom that I did not fully agree with," she said. But she changed her mind when she started working and had to worry about bread-and-butter issues.

"I realised that there were sacrifices that had to be made for the many things that I now appreciate, like the safety of our streets, accommodation for the poor and retirement savings through the Central Provident Fund scheme," she said.

Ang Mo Kio GRC MP Janderjit Singh said his mother had cried on learning of Mr Lee's death.

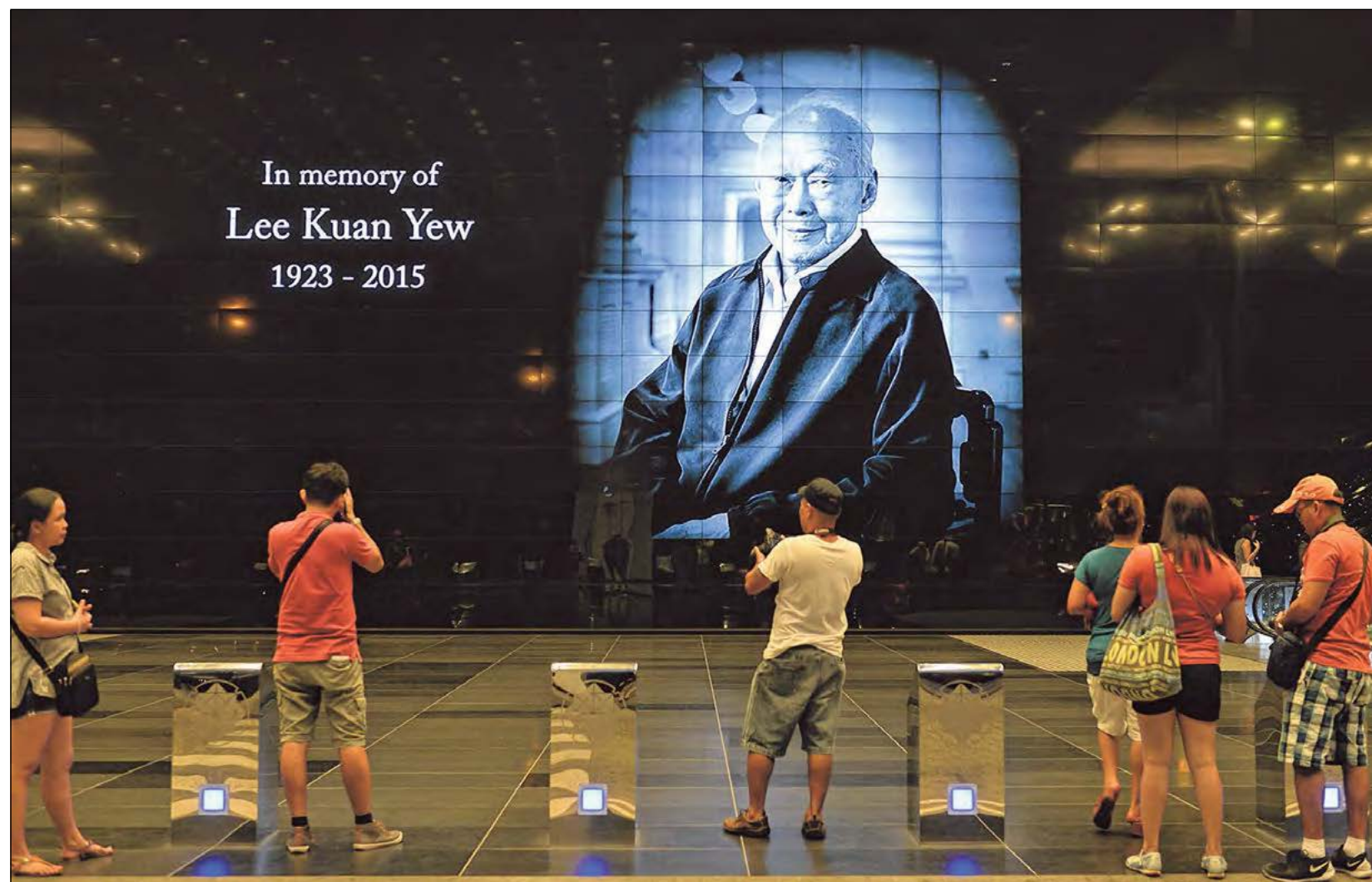
"She said he is a giver: He gave us Singapore, he gave us comfort and he gave us peace. She came to Singapore before independence and she said no one cared, but he cared for us. So I think we should remember him as someone who cared for us and changed our lives," he said.

He was at Ang Mo Kio Central Stage, where a tribute site for Mr Lee was set up for residents.

Health attendant Teng Poh Geok, 57, said she had never interacted with Mr Lee but knew he was a great man from listening to stories her father, a long-time grassroots leader, had told her.

"My father told me he was strict and fierce but only because he did what he thought was right, even if others were against him," said Madam Teng, fighting back tears.

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A tribute to former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew at Suntec City. At tribute centres such as Tampines Community Plaza, more than 2,500 people had turned up by mid-afternoon and more than 800 handwritten notes were left on a large board with a portrait of Mr Lee. ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA



Many people turned up at Ang Mo Kio Central Stage, one of several tribute centres across the island, to pay tribute to Mr Lee. ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA



Members of the SAF rehearsing for today's ceremony in which Mr Lee's body will be conveyed via a ceremonial gun carriage from the Istana to Parliament House. PHOTOS: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



Body to lie in state after solemn journey

By JANICE HENG and JERMYN CHOW

AS SINGAPOREANS bid farewell to Mr Lee Kuan Yew, another leg of his final journey starts today.

On the one hand there will be ceremony and gestures that represent the highest state honour accorded a leader. On the other, doors will open for ordinary people to pay their respects.

The journey starts this morning with a ceremonial gun carriage conveying Mr Lee's body from the Istana to Parliament House, where it will lie in state until Saturday.

At 9am, the coffin bearer party of eight Army, Navy, Air Force and Police Force officers will march into Sri Temasek, where the private wake had been held.

The national flag will be draped over Mr Lee's coffin – the highest of state honours. The casket will then be placed in a glass case up on a platform sitting on the ceremonial gun carriage.

Eight pallbearers, comprising Mr Lee's Istana staff, will follow behind.

As the Singapore Armed Forces Band plays Beethoven Funeral March No.1, the family – led by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong – will walk with the gun carriage from Sri Temasek for about 70m.

They will then head separately to Parliament House, while the gun carriage carries on past an English garden with yellow flame trees, towards the main building of the Istana.

There, President Tony Tan Keng Yam and Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong will be waiting to offer their respects.

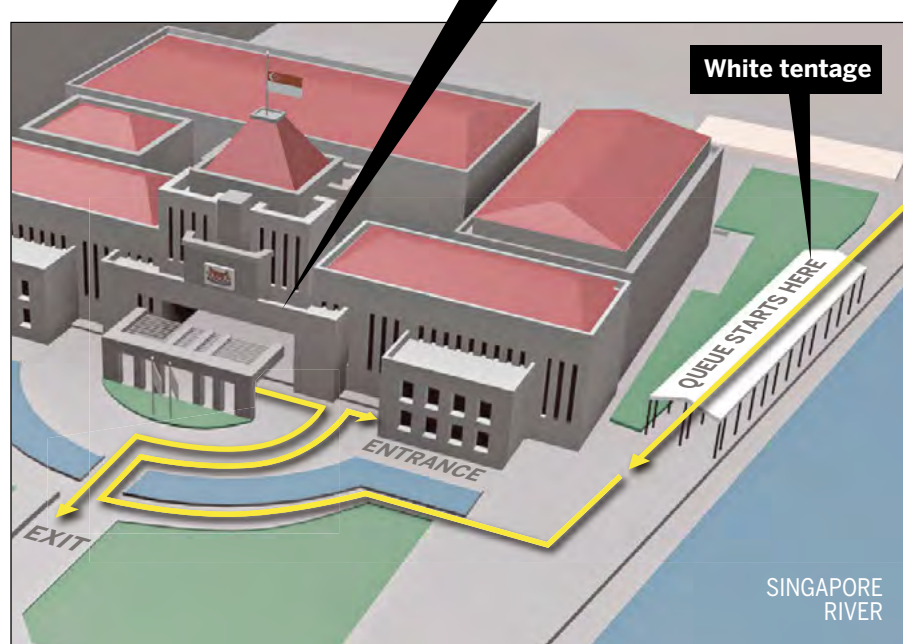
Public can pay respects from today

Mr Lee Kuan Yew's body will lie in state at Parliament House from today till Saturday

People can pay their respects from 10am to 8pm daily, till Saturday

Visitors should enter from the promenade along the Singapore River

No dress code, but visitors are advised to keep solemnity of occasion in mind



A bagpiper from the Singapore Gurkha Contingent will play Auld Lang Syne.

Then, the gun carriage will leave the Istana and start its 2km journey to Parliament House.

It will travel along parts of Orchard Road, Bras Basah Road and North Bridge Road. These stretches will be closed to traffic from 8.45am to 9.30am.

Motorists can expect traffic delays along affected roads, said the Traffic Police in a statement.

Road closures from tomorrow till Saturday will also affect eight bus services: SBS services 100, 107, 130, 131 and 195, and SMRT services 75, 167 and 961.

At Parliament House, the coffin will be received by the Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant-Gener-

al Nee Chee Meng, Commissioner of Police Hong Wee Teck, Speaker of Parliament Halimah Yacob, PM Lee and the rest of the family.

There, the first of many Vigil Guards will be mounted. In this tradition, which is a mark of respect, an officer stands at each corner of the casket, head bowed and facing away. They are led by a senior officer who stands at the

head of the casket, facing it. President Tan and his wife will arrive to pay their respects. Over the next few days, friends and former colleagues of the late Mr Lee will also hold vigil.

People can pay their respects from 10am to 8pm daily, till Saturday.

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White tentage and condolence boards have been set up along the riverside promenade by Parliament House, where visitors will queue today to enter and pay their last respects to the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew. ST GRAPHICS ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

Paying your last respects at Parliament House

MR LEE Kuan Yew's body lies in state at Parliament House from today to Saturday for the public to pay their last respects.

Yesterday, workers were seen putting the finishing touches to white tentage extending from Parliament House to the statue of Sir Stamford Raffles by the Singapore River. Television

screens have also been set up along the way. Here is a guide on the lying-in-state:

Can anyone pay their respects? Yes, although children should be accompanied by adults.

When should I go? Visiting hours are from 10am to

8pm daily.

Is there a dress code? How should I behave?

There is no dress code or code of conduct. However, the public is advised to "be mindful of the solemnity and decorum of the occasion, both in their dressing and bearing", according to the

official Remembering Lee Kuan Yew Facebook page.

Where do I enter?

Instead of the usual public entrance on Parliament Place, visitors should enter from the promenade along the Singapore River. Visitors will be ushered to the Hall of Parliament House,

where Mr Lee's body lies.

Can I write messages of condolences or leave flowers?

You can't do this inside the hall. But you can write tributes to the late Mr Lee on condolence boards that will line the queuing area along the river. Flowers may be laid there too.

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By LIM YAN LIANG

IT WAS six decades ago, but Mr Wan Daud Embong remembers clearly the day Mr Lee Kuan Yew won him his freedom from jail.

Then a member of the Singapore Factory and Shop Workers' Union, Mr Wan Daud had been detained by the Lim Yew Hock government many months earlier in 1956, accused of being a commu-

nist.

Mr Lee, who was the union's legal adviser, represented him in court and argued for him to be freed.

Mr Wan Daud said: "I was released without condition. By then I had been under detention for nine months. I was 17 years old."

Yesterday, the 77-year-old was among more than 8,000 people who made the trip to Tanjong Pagar Community Club (TPCC) to pay their respects to Mr Lee, who

had represented Tanjong Pagar for 60 years, since 1955. TPCC is one of 18 community sites where the public can pay their respects.

Release from jail was a defining moment for Mr Wan Daud – it was then that he decided to follow Mr Lee, he said yesterday.

He later became the chairman of Malay affairs at the PAP Siglap branch committee and remains a party member.

He said: "I decided that I

would follow Mr Lee, and as long as the (People's Action Party) keeps its promises, I will serve the PAP to the best that I can. And it has kept its promises: to educate the people, to house the people, and to unite them, not divided across racial lines."

Another person at the community club whose life was changed by Mr Lee was Mr Tan Hai Yan.

The 61-year-old was just 11 years old when he first heard Mr

Lee shout "Merdeka" (Malay for independence) at a rally his parents took him to.

In a fitting tribute yesterday, Mr Tan pumped his fist and shouted "Merdeka" at the top of his lungs, in front of a portrait of Mr Lee.

He told The Straits Times in Mandarin: "Till today, seeing him shout the word on television makes me emotional."

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Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015



18 sites to pay last respects

EIGHTEEN community sites are being set up for the public to pay their last respects to Mr Lee Kuan Yew. The sites will be open from 10am to 8pm until March 29. Residents can also visit the sites for a live telecast of the State Funeral on March 29.

Ang Mo Kio GRC

Ang Mo Kio Central Stage @ Ang Mo Kio Town Centre
Between 712 and 709 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 8

Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC

Toa Payoh Central Community Club
93 Toa Payoh Central Singapore 310194

Chua Chu Kang GRC

Hardcourt opposite Choa Chu Kang MRT Station
Choa Chu Kang Loop, Singapore 680355

East Coast GRC

Open space @ Bedok Town Centre
(In front of 209 New Upper Changi Road Singapore 460209, outside Sheng Siong Supermarket)

Jurong GRC

Canopy beside Jurong Regional Library
Jurong East Central 1

Moulmein-Kallang GRC

Hong Lim Park next to Telok Ayer Hong Lim Green Community Centre
20 Upper Pickering Street Singapore 058284

Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC

Sengkang Community Hub (Hardcourt)
2 Sengkang Square Singapore 545025

Tanjong Pagar GRC

Tanjong Pagar Community Club
101 Cantonment Road Singapore 089774

Tampines GRC

Tampines Community Plaza (in front of Tampines One Mall)
10 Tampines Central 1 Singapore 529536

People's Association Headquarters

9 King George's Avenue Singapore 208581

Aljunied GRC

Kovan Hub
No. 206 Hougang Street 21 Singapore 530206
(Near Heartland Mall)

Holland-Bukit Timah GRC

Senja-Cashew Community Club
101 Bukit Panjang Road Singapore 679910

Marine Parade GRC

Kampong Kembangan Community Club (Foyer)
5 Lengkok Tiga Singapore 417408

Nee Soon GRC

Hardcourt at Block 749
Yishun Street 72 Singapore 760749

Sembawang GRC

Woodlands Civic Centre (Open Space)
900 South Woodlands Drive Singapore 730900

West Coast GRC

Block 442 and Block 449 Clementi Avenue 3 (Open Area)
(Entrance of Clementi Town Centre Estate)

Marina Barrage

260 Marina Way Singapore 018976

Singapore Botanic Gardens

(Botany Centre)
1 Chury Road Singapore 259569

TRIBUTES: A NATION GRIEVES

A poignant absence on Aug 9, says Chiam

Opposition veteran says Mr Lee will stay a symbol of Singapore's success

By THAM YUEN-C

VETERAN opposition politician Chiam See Tong yesterday said Mr Lee Kuan Yew had been for Singapore what British prime minister Winston Churchill was for his country.

In a heartfelt condolence letter to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on his father's death, the leader of the Singapore People's Party said: "He was there at the time when Singapore was swarmed with numerous problems, ranging from domestic to international issues. He was there, just as Britain needed Winston Churchill during World War II – always taking a strategic and long-term view of Singapore."

Mr Lee, Singapore's first Prime Minister, died on Monday at Singapore General Hospital, where he had been in intensive care since Feb 5, when he had severe pneumonia. He was 91.

Like several other political players this week, Mr Chiam listed Mr Lee's achievements. "He was a great statesman, parliamentarian and a master of public policy. "No one else had shaped modern Singapore more than Lee

Kuan Yew, since he became Prime Minister in 1959. He was a man for all seasons. He will live on in history, remaining for future generations the symbol of Singapore's success," he said of his fiercest rival.

Mr Chiam, the longest-serving opposition MP until 2011, said he and his wife, Non-Constituency MP Lina Chiam, were saddened by Mr Lee's death.

"His absence from our 50th National Day Parade later this year will be particularly poignant to us," he added.

Meanwhile, Mr Ravi Philemon, who was with the National Solidarity Party until recently, said: "With the passing away of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, a part of us is also gone."

Amid the tributes, the Think Centre, a political non-governmental organisation, was critical of Mr Lee, saying he suppressed the media, unions and civil society, as well as his political opponents.

"He even developed the process of bankrupting his political opponents through defamation suits into a fine art, sending a chilling effect across society," it said. yuen@sph.com.sg

PA staff recall high expectations



PA chief executive director Ang Hak Seng (right), together with board member Timothy James de Souza (second from right) and about 2,000 other PA employees, visiting a tribute site at the PA headquarters yesterday to pay their respects to Mr Lee, who was the founding chairman of the statutory board created in 1960. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

By RACHEL CHANG
ASSISTANT POLITICAL EDITOR

AS A young Lieutenant-Colonel, Mr Timothy James de Souza was given the honour of reading out a roll call of 350 names at the National Day Awards ceremony in the late 1970s.

Anxious to pronounce them correctly, he sought the help of a Mandarin tutor.

Despite this, the day after the ceremony, Mr de Souza, then aged 32, was summoned to the Istana and told: "The Prime Minister says you made nine mistakes." Mr Lee's staff even took down the name and number of the

young army officer's Mandarin tutor – and they then contacted her to check Mr de Souza had put in some proper preparation. They were satisfied that he had, and he was given another chance the following year to get the task right.

This time, he nailed it. Mr de Souza, now 67 and a board member of the People's Association (PA), said yesterday: "I learnt that you have to really prepare. But you can only do your best, not more than that. He would give you another chance, and then once you've delivered the goods the way he wants it, he would give you the praise."

Mr de Souza and about 2,000 other PA employees visited a tribute site at the PA headquarters yesterday to pay their respects to Mr Lee, who died on Monday.

Mr Lee, 91, was the founding chairman of the PA, the statutory board created in 1960 to group together all key voluntary social organisations.

Its role was to promote closer ties among Singapore's ethnic groups, for which it received government resources.

Mr Lee's exacting nature was also remembered by one of PA's staff members in his Tanjong Pagar GRC.

Mr Long Khin Suan, 66, a former regional officer, recalled

that "his demands were very high. You had to do your best".

There were three community events that Mr Lee never missed each year, despite his national duties and foreign travel.

They were the National Day dinner, Chinese New Year dinner and Tree-Planting Day.

"We put a lot of pressure on ourselves to make sure nothing went wrong at these events," said Mr Long. "If there were problems, he would let you know. He didn't put blame, but we would feel very bad."

PA's current deputy chairman, Mr Lim Swee Say, said in a condolence letter issued on behalf of the grassroots movement that Mr Lee put in place "the building blocks of a socially connected Singapore".

Community centres and residents' committees, present in every Housing Board neighbourhood, were meant to break down the linguistic and cultural barriers that divided Singaporeans in the country's fledgling years, he said.

The PA also had the task of promoting the Government's agenda in the heartlands.

"In setting up the PA, Mr Lee laid the foundation for the Government to be closer to the people and the people closer to the Government," wrote Mr Lim.

"Mr Lee's vision of a united and harmonious multiracial nation is a work-in-progress that will never end. He will always be the inspiration to us all in the grassroots movement."

PA's chief executive director Ang Hak Seng said Singaporeans of all races and religions coming together to mourn Mr Lee was one sign of the success of his and PA's efforts to promote multiracialism.

"We had a difficult beginning, and we cannot take racial harmony for granted," he noted. "Seeing different races and religions coming together to honour him, this in itself is racial harmony."

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The labour movement will hold a memorial service for Mr Lee Kuan Yew on Friday. Yesterday, about 500 union members and workers observed a one-minute silence for Singapore's first Prime Minister. Besides labour chief Lim Swee Say, others at the ceremony included NTUC deputy secretary-general Chan Chun Sing, Mr Heng Chee How, Mr Patrick Tay, Ms Nora Kang, Ms Cham Hui Fong, Mr Yeo Khue Leng, Mr Desmond Choo and Mr Nakalingam Silva. ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA

Without tripartism, we won't be here, says labour chief

By TOH YONG CHUAN
MANPOWER CORRESPONDENT

THE labour movement, in a symbolic move, will hold a memorial service on Friday for Mr Lee Kuan Yew at his first permanent home, the Singapore Conference Hall.

The building, long associated with trade unionism in Singapore, was officially opened in 1965 by Mr Lee, who had played a major role in nurturing tripartism to avoid the confrontation style of labour relations in other countries.

This role was underlined yesterday when the National Trades Un-

ion Congress (NTUC) held a ceremony at its current home in One Marina Boulevard, with about 500 union members and workers observing a one-minute silence for Singapore's first Prime Minister.

Labour chief Lim Swee Say later told reporters: "Mr Lee created tripartism. Without tripartism, without his vision for Singapore, we will not be here."

This model of unions, employers and the Government working together will also be highlighted at Friday's memorial service by one of the speakers, NTUC's first chairman Mahmud Awang.

The 87-year-old told The Straits Times he will talk about the early struggles of workers and how Mr Lee improved workers' lives by his non-confrontational approach towards trade unionism.

Other speakers will include former Singapore president S.R. Nathan, who had headed NTUC's Labour Research Unit, as well as younger and older workers.

It will allow the labour movement to pay its respects to Mr Lee, said Mr Lim yesterday.

Earlier, during the ceremony, he read aloud NTUC's condolence letter to unionists and workers. "Mr Lee dedicated his whole life to the workers and people of Singapore. He has left an indelible mark on the lives of all of us."

He also said that while Mr Lee pushed for economic development, "he has always believed that the purpose of economic progress and development must be to serve the interest of the people and workers".

Among those who turned up to sign the condolence book was office attendant Wan Cheong, who works at Allen & Gledhill, a law firm with offices at One Marina Boulevard.

The 80-year-old has been living for more than 30 years in Bukit Merah, which is part of Tanjong Pagar GRC where Mr Lee was an MP.

"I attended his rallies, he spoke with so much passion," said Madam Wan. "I have never met him personally, but I wanted to thank him for making life better for Singaporeans, especially older ones

like me."

NTUC has also published a 40-page newsletter compiling Mr Lee's quotes and photographs from the 1950s.

"(The newsletter) captures all that he had said, all that he has done for workers and with the unions," said Mr Lim. "We hope it will help the public and Singaporeans understand better how great a leader he was."

The free newsletter is available at selected NTUC FairPrice supermarkets.

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Additional reporting by Samantha Boh



Mr Roy Barker, a Singapore permanent resident, is proud of the tattoo of Mr Lee Kuan Yew on his left forearm. He says "there's always a good reason behind (Mr Lee's) strict policies". ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

Englishman shows he is a big admirer

MR Lee Kuan Yew certainly made his mark on Englishman Roy Barker – the permanent resident has a tattoo of the former Prime Minister on his left forearm.

The black-and-white portrait of Mr Lee is carved on the inside of Mr Barker's forearm. The tattoo spans the area from where his watchstrap starts to his inner elbow, complete with the initials L.K.Y.

The 73-year-old retiree told The Straits Times: "A lot of people never liked Mr Lee because of his harsh policies and asked, 'What do you want to get a tattoo for?' I would say, 'He's a great man, he deserves it, and I want to give him recognition.'"

Mr Barker, who has lived in Singapore since 1973, was not a fan initially, finding Mr Lee's early policies harsh. The campaign against men having long hair, for example, was "unheard of".

But Mr Barker, who hails from industrial Sheffield in northern England, "started to understand he was doing everything for the good of Singapore and Singaporeans. There's always a good reason behind his strict policies and he's not doing it to be funny".

The prominent tattoo of Mr Lee is one of eight Mr Barker sports, including two marking his time in the British army – which led him to Singapore in 1965.

"What Mr Lee did in Singapore, the Western leaders have been grappling and trying to do for years, and he did it almost overnight," said Mr Barker, who is married with three children.

"He gave everybody their own home. When I was a young kid in Sheffield, I didn't know anybody who owned a home."

KOK XING HUI



Mr Jack Sim is forking out \$10,000 for 10 busts of Mr Lee. One has already been delivered and it sits in the garden at his home in Katong.

Not one, but 10 bronze busts for 'Mr Toilet'

THE founder of the World Toilet Organisation, Mr Jack Sim, is internationally renowned for crusading for better sanitation. So when he wanted to mark Singapore's golden jubilee, the go-getter really bust out.

He is getting 10, half-a-metre tall bronze busts – head-and-shoulder sculptures – made of his hero, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, costing a total of \$10,000.

One is already complete and sits in the garden at his home, a bungalow in Katong.

When it arrived last month, Mr Sim liked it so much he decided to order more.

He is not sure where to put them, but he is donating three to the Institute of Technical Education colleges. As for the other six, "I'm dreaming that (they) could go to every Singaporean

around the world."

Mr Sim, 58, first sketched what he wanted based on portraits of the former Prime Minister, sent the sketches to a bronze workshop, and then went through several rounds of refinement over three months.

He said: "I wanted to get the feeling of a robust, rugged, strong and brave person. I took his past pictures, and interpreted it in an artistic manner that showcased his character."

On his choice of subject, he said of the late Mr Lee: "(He) is our biggest hero. I was born in the 1950s in a slum and I didn't know the country could be what it is now. But through the whole journey, life just became better and better for us. I felt it was a privilege to have had such a leader."

KOK XING HUI

Memorial exhibition opens today at National Museum

By MELODY ZACCHEUS

A NEW memorial exhibition on the life of the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew has been put together by a team from the National Museum of Singapore.

Called In Memoriam: Lee Kuan Yew, the showcase chronicles his life and political career, and highlights the ideals and convictions that shaped him.

It opens today and will run daily from 10am to 8pm till April 26. The memorial showcase will be held at the Stamford Road museum's glass atrium on level 2. Admission is free.

Highlights on display include Mr Lee's personal artefacts such as a barrister wig he wore for his admission to the Bar, a Rolex watch that the Singapore Union of Postal and Telecommunications Workers gave to him after he successfully represented it in arbitration proceedings over a wage dispute, and the rosewood rostrum he used to deliver his National Day Rally speeches from the 1970s.

Featuring seven panels, the exhibition examines Mr Lee's early formative years as a law student at Cambridge and his involvement in the anti-colonial struggle. It then goes on to cover his political career – from being a key figure in forming the People's Action Party and later, as Singapore's Prime Minister, to his final years as Senior Minister and Minister Mentor.

The museum's director, Ms Angelita Teo, said it is fitting that the museum, as the main institution that showcases Singapore's history to the public, presents a memorial exhibition in tribute to Mr Lee. "The objective is for people to appreciate and reflect on the magnitude of Mr Lee's contributions to the nation and the legacy he has left behind," she said.

The National Library Board in Victoria Street will also be holding an exhibition on the late elder statesman's public life at its lobby. It will feature his most notable quotes drawn from speeches dating back to the 1950s.

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A man moving a wreath along near Parliament House yesterday afternoon. Mr Lee's body lies in state at Parliament House from today to Saturday for the public to pay their last respects. Visiting hours are from 10am to 8pm daily. PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES



People's Action Party activists from Tanjong Pagar GRC and Radin Mas observed a minute of silence and paid tribute to the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew at the party's new Upper Changi Road headquarters last night. Mr Lee, who died on Monday at age 91, was the PAP's first secretary-general and represented the Tanjong Pagar area for 60 years. MPs (from far left) Indraneel Rajah, Chan Chun Sing, Lily Neo (partially hidden) and Sam Tan led some 250 activists in cheers of "Majulah PAP, Majulah Singapura!" at the event. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

TRIBUTES: A NATION GRIEVES

At the NUS site of his old college, he still touches lives

Mr Lee remembered for deep interest in, and contributions to, education

By PEARL LEE

MEDICAL student Koh Shi Min, 23, has never met Mr Lee Kuan Yew personally, but it is one of his charitable initiatives that has allowed her to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

The daughter of a taxi-driver father and a supermarket sales-promoter mother had applied for medical school at the National University of Singapore (NUS) after completing her diploma at Singapore Polytechnic in 2012.

"I was accepted into medical school, but the course fees were much higher than other courses and I was worried about it," she said.

But with her excellent grades, she managed to get the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship to Encourage Upgrading Award, which is given to polytechnic students pursuing a full-time degree in universities here.

"Without the scholarship, I might have given up my dream of becoming a doctor and chosen other courses instead," Ms Koh said. The scholarship was made possible as the late Mr Lee had donated sale proceeds from the autographed version of the second volume of his memoirs.

Ms Koh was one of the more than 1,000 students, staff and faculty members of NUS who went to the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy yesterday afternoon

to give their condolences to the family of Singapore's first Prime Minister.

Mr Lee died early Monday morning at the age of 91, after being hospitalised for more than a month for pneumonia.

The memorial ceremony at NUS' Bukit Timah campus started with a video screening of the man and his achievements.

At the event, NUS president Tan Chor Chuan said it was fitting for the university to pay tribute to Mr Lee at the very place where he had studied and met his wife in the 1940s.

The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy now stands where Singapore's first tertiary education institution, Raffles College, used to be. Mr Lee and his wife were both former students of Raffles College. NUS had named its public policy school after Mr Lee in 2004 to honour his contribu-



(Above) Ms Koh Shi Min could do her medical course with help from the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship to Encourage Upgrading Award. (Left) The Singapore flag and NUS flags flying at half-mast. ST PHOTOS: TERENCE LIM, TIFFANY GOH

tions to education in Singapore.

Prof Tan remembers a meeting he had with Mr Lee about 15 years ago. Then, Prof Tan was in charge of coordinating a presentation on biomedical sciences research at NUS to Mr Lee. "When the presentation started, Mr Lee did not ask

very much about the science or the projects. Instead, he asked the professors and presenters, 'Where did you come from?', 'Where did you study?', 'Why are you doing your research here and not somewhere else?'"

The reason for Mr Lee doing

this became clear to Prof Tan later on. "Biomedical sciences is an area that relies on having the right type of talent. And the question really is, would you be able to attract quality... individuals that you need," he said.

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Events axed or postponed during week of national mourning

By MELISSA LIM

ACTIVITIES and events have been cancelled or postponed island-wide, in a mark of respect for Singapore's first Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, 91, who died on Monday morning.

This includes a visit by a foreign leader, sporting events and a travel fair, as the country observes seven days of national mourning, which ends on Sunday.

The People's Association has cancelled its Chingay parade at Nee Soon GRC this Saturday. It was the last of five satellite parades meant to take the annual Chinese New Year street procession to the heartland.

Meanwhile, the inaugural Travel Revolution fair meant to be held this weekend - organised by a group of travel agencies that broke away from the annual Natas (National Association of Travel Agents Singapore) fair - has been pushed back by a week.

Ms Alicia Seah, a spokesperson for the fair, said: "The postponement will definitely affect overseas exhibitors and partners around the world, but we felt the need to postpone the event as a mark of respect for Mr Lee Kuan Yew. Singapore is what it is because of this one great man."

And the 77th Singapore Open Track and Field Championships, originally scheduled for this weekend, will take place on April 4 and 5 at the National Stadium.

Free sports activities at the Singapore Sports Hub, part of its Experience Sports community outreach programme, will be cancelled this week, as well as all activities at its library.

Likewise, the Esplanade has cancelled all its free performances at its concourse and outdoor theatre this week.

A Chinese classical music concert at the venue on Sunday has also been cancelled, and those who bought tickets will be given a full refund.

Elsewhere, Resorts World Sentosa has toned down its programming, cancelling its nightly shows and street shows in Universal Studios Singapore, while Marina Bay Sands has cancelled its nightly multimedia light and water show.

Thailand's Prime Minister, General Prayut Chan-o-cha, who was supposed to make his first visit to Singapore yesterday, has postponed his trip, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Both sides will work on resuming the visit and the Singapore-Thailand Leaders' Retreat at a mutually convenient time," it said in a statement.

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Additional reporting by Wang Meng Meng and Jessica Lim



The mood at Mr Lee Kuan Yew's alma mater Raffles Institution was sombre. School principals delivered speeches about Mr Lee at assemblies yesterday. ST PHOTO: LAU FOOK KONG

Telok Kurau Primary pupils learn about founding father's legacy

By KASH CHEONG

A MAN who kept his promises, played a key role in making Singapore clean and green and was a loving husband.

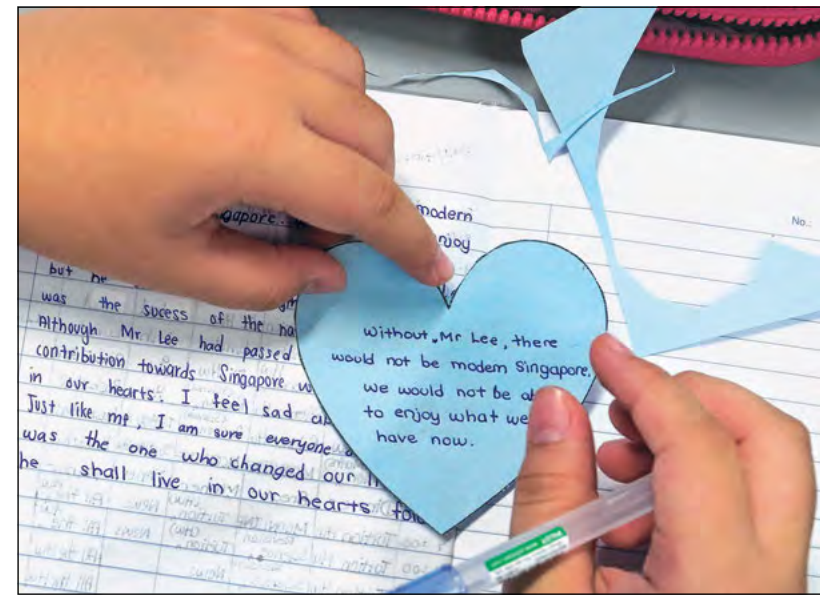
Some 1,300 pupils from Telok Kurau Primary, aged seven to 12, were taught about Mr Lee Kuan Yew's legacy during an hour-long slide show yesterday.

Teachers from the school - Mr Lee's alma mater - impressed upon pupils the influence of the former Prime Minister.

They recounted, for instance, how he delivered on his bold promises - such as in 1961, when a fire swept through Bukit Ho Swee and he promised distraught residents new flats to live in within nine months. Together with his team, he made it happen.

"He was a man of his word," said Madam Mariama Rashid, 32, national education coordinator at the school, who delivered the slide show on Mr Lee's life.

Pupils were also told how Mr Lee played a key role in all aspects



A Telok Kurau Primary pupil writing a tribute to Mr Lee on Monday. The school's pupils also folded origami flowers. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

of the country's development, from housing to economics to defence policies.

Principals at schools across the nation delivered speeches about

Singapore's founding father at assemblies yesterday, drawing on a note Education Minister Heng Swee Keat had posted on Facebook.

Mrs Charis Wong, principal of Telok Kurau Primary, said: "People often say Lee Kuan Yew has four children. The fourth was Singapore and he was always speaking about her, thinking about her." The pupils read out tributes to Mr Lee that they had written on heart-shaped cards. Others folded origami flowers, which will be gathered into bouquets and delivered to Parliament House when the school community pay their last respects there.

On Sunday, Primary Six pupil Lim Yu Li, 12, wanted to travel to Singapore General Hospital to place a card at the well-wishers' corner, but her uncle's car broke down en route. "I just want to thank Mr Lee - he did not give up on the dream of Singapore," she said.

At Raffles Institution, Mr Lee's other alma mater, the mood was sombre. "I am grateful to Mr Lee for emphasising meritocracy... so that we all have the chance to make a living for ourselves," RI student Rachel Koh, 17, said.

Mr Lee studied at RI from 1936 to 1940, but was never quite the model student, with his "mischievous, playful streak". As a student, he was always a late riser, "an owl, more than a lark", he wrote in his memoirs. When he was late for a third time in a term in 1938, then-headmaster D.W. McLeod gave him "three of his trousers on", Mr Lee added.

Student Isaac Leong, 17, felt such anecdotes made Mr Lee, the politician and towering statesman, more relatable. "Still, it takes a special person to achieve what he did," he said.

At Crest Secondary, which specialises in the Normal (Technical) curriculum, 14-year-old Daniel Ismadir said: "He and his team cleared up the Singapore River. Without him, we would not have the clean and green city that we do now."

Flags in all schools are flying at half-mast. Many also observed a minute of silence yesterday.

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HE WAS THE REASON FOR VISITING S'PORE

"I have always considered him one of the wisest and most intelligent people I have ever known. We met together many times and I was the better for it. I often travelled to Singapore and, with all due respect to the appeal of the city, the real reason was to see Harry Lee. I am so glad that I was able to visit Singapore and see Harry once more in late 2013."

- Dr George Shultz, who was US Secretary of State from 1982 to 1989. The two men had known each other since 1973 and would tap each other's views on global developments regularly.



Mr Lee's death was reported on the front pages of many major newspapers around the world. Many of them devoted numerous pages to the life and achievements of Singapore's founding father.



World leaders continue to hail Mr Lee's legacy

Many praise model of governance and express gratitude for his counsel

By RAVI VELLOOR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

THE tributes continued to flow yesterday for Mr Lee Kuan Yew as the world pondered his contribution to regional peace and his models of governance and development that were often held as a beacon to leaders in many parts of the globe.

United States President Barack Obama phoned Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to express condolences and convey "his appreciation for founding Prime Minister Lee's wise counsel and strong support for US-Singapore relations".

Several world figures have confirmed their attendance for Sunday's funeral, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Myanmar President Thein Sein, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, South Korean President Park Geun Hye and Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.

"He laid a concrete foundation for the development of every aspect of Singapore, based on good governance and morality. He put public interest above self," General Prayut said in an interview yesterday with The Straits Times and Channel News Asia, expressing his condolences to Singaporeans.

More names are expected to be added to the list of dignitaries travelling to Singapore, as Asia shows its respect for the last of the titans who helped deliver their people from European colonial rule and set the region on course for rapid development.

Yesterday, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe were at the respective Singapore missions in their countries to sign condolence books, one of which is set to be opened in Washington's Capitol Hill today.

Former Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono called Mr Lee a close personal friend as well as "a true friend of Indonesia".

"I have always benefited from my conversations with him," he said in a clip posted on his Twitter account. "In every one of those meetings, he always gave me valuable motivation and advice for the success of Indonesia."

Dr Yudhoyono also noted that Mr Lee was one of the founding fathers of Asean.

"Mr Lee had been a key figure in the remarkable transformation of South-east Asia into the peaceful, dynamic community that it has become today. He will be sorely missed, not just by Singaporeans but by Indonesians and South-east Asians."

Asean also bowed in respect to

Mr Lee, who helped guide it through its formative years.

In a letter to PM Lee, Asean secretary-general Le Luong Minh acknowledged Mr Lee as one of the "instrumental in the establishment of the Association of South-east Asian Nations" in 1967.

Singapore is one of Asean's five founding members and, together with the other leaders, he guided the grouping in its formative years, the letter noted, going on to add that he "has left a lasting legacy not only for Singapore but also for Asean and he will be greatly missed". The other founding members are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam joined later.

In Laos, the first to send condolences was Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong when the Singapore embassy opened a condolence book within hours of Mr Lee's passing. Yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulth drove to the embassy to record his government's condolences. In the Philippines, Finance Minister Cesar Purisima and dozens of diplomats signed the condolence book.

Mr Lee's impact reached into some of the unlikeliest spots of Asia, one of which was the hinterland district of Tiruvavur in southern India's Tamil Nadu state, which has sent many workers to Singapore. Condolence banners to mourn him were put up on streets and small meetings were held.

"Lee is like the Himalayas. He

is a tall leader who eradicated poverty from many Tamil families. Our deepest condolences," read one banner, while another called him "the real protector of Singapore".

In Kuala Lumpur, Democratic Action Party chief Lim Guan Eng drove to the Singapore High Commission to record his respect for Mr Lee. He was accompanied by a host of senior party figures.

"Lee Kuan Yew is the legend who started the model of transformation from an undeveloped country to a developed country by relying solely on human capital," said Mr Lim. "I think his sheer willpower, some say through iron and blood, transformed Singapore from a Third World to First World nation."

Singapore's model of development has often been sought for replication. For instance, many consider Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone, which opened in 1985, as having been deeply influenced by Singapore's port and industrial parks.

Yesterday, Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Al Maktoum, the development-focused emir of Dubai and Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, hailed Mr Lee as a "truly great leader" and "my dear friend".

"The strength of his fighting spirit and the depth of his wisdom charted a new path for his country," Sheikh Mohammed said in a condolence message. "Lee Kuan Yew will be deeply missed."

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Additional reporting by Asrul Hadi Abdullahi Sani, Nirmal Ghosh, Nirmal Ganapathy, Zubaidah Nazeer and Raul Dancel



Leaders around the world continued to express condolences yesterday. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (top) signed a condolence book at the Singapore embassy in Tokyo, while United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (above) paid his respects at the Singapore permanent mission in New York. PHOTOS: EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Regional newspapers pay homage to 'the sage and giant of South-east Asia'

By LEE SEOK HWAI

REGIONAL media continued to cover the death of Mr Lee Kuan Yew extensively, with newspapers devoting front-page headlines and entire sections to the life and achievements of Singapore's founding father.

Malaysia's top English-language paper, The Star, devoted eight pages across various sections yesterday. One headline was "Malayans share the grief".

Calling Mr Lee "a steely man", the newspaper said: "He found himself as Prime Minister of a tiny nation with little resources but dragged it, whether its citizens liked it or not, through the decades and moulded it into the modern-day metropolis it now is."

The New Straits Times (NST), Berita Harian and Utusan Malaysia ran black-and-white photos of Mr Lee on their front pages.

The NST said on its cover he "had transformed the Republic from an island trading post into an economic powerhouse" and dedicated six pages to reactions and commentaries on his death.

Malay-language newspapers

such as Berita Harian, often critical of Singapore and its leaders, had several pages in honour of the "architect of modern Singapore".

The Chinese-language Sin Chew Jit Poh said Mr Lee spent his life "embracing Singapore".

In Indonesia, at least six papers, including Kompas, Jakarta Globe and Jakarta Post, gave front-page treatment to news of Mr Lee's death.

Jakarta Post eulogised Mr Lee with a commentary headlined "Lee Kuan Yew, the sage and giant of South-east Asia" as well as an editorial headlined "Lessons from a neighbour". The latter lauded Mr Lee's policies to curb terrorism and foster harmony among its different religious groups.

Jakarta Globe bade "Farewell to a Giant of the 20th Century" and said Indonesia will remember Mr Lee as an "inspiration".

Thai newspaper The Nation published an editorial which called strong rule of law Mr Lee's legacy.

"Justice and a vision for multi-racial harmony are what set Lee Kuan Yew apart in South-east Asia," it said.

In the Philippines, the three ma-

offshoot of the People's Daily, mouthpiece of the Communist Party - hailed China's "maturity" in maintaining good ties with Singapore though the latter is also courted by major powers and neighbouring countries, a reference to the Republic's close ties to Western countries, especially the United States.

Japan's Asahi Shimbun ran a commentary on "The man who cultivated the pearl of the East", while The Japan Times looked back on Mr Lee's quotes.

The Times of India carried the news of Mr Lee's death on the top right corner on its front page. It also ran stories inside, describing Mr Lee as "a tall statesman, one who was probably too big for Singapore".

Newspapers in Australia paid tribute to Mr Lee's success in transforming Singapore into a modern economic powerhouse but criticised his "ruthless" approach to cracking down on political opponents and restricting free speech.

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Additional reporting by Shannon Teoh, Zubaidah Nazeer, Raul Dancel, Khor Kian Beng and Jasmine Osada

The Global Times tabloid - an

THE LEE KUAN YEW I REMEMBER

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015

Our chief diplomat to the world

By TOMMY KOH

MR LEE Kuan Yew was the most famous Singaporean in the world. For nearly half a century, he personified Singapore to the world. During his long tenure as Prime Minister (of independent Singapore), from 1965 to 1990, he was the principal architect of Singapore's foreign policy.

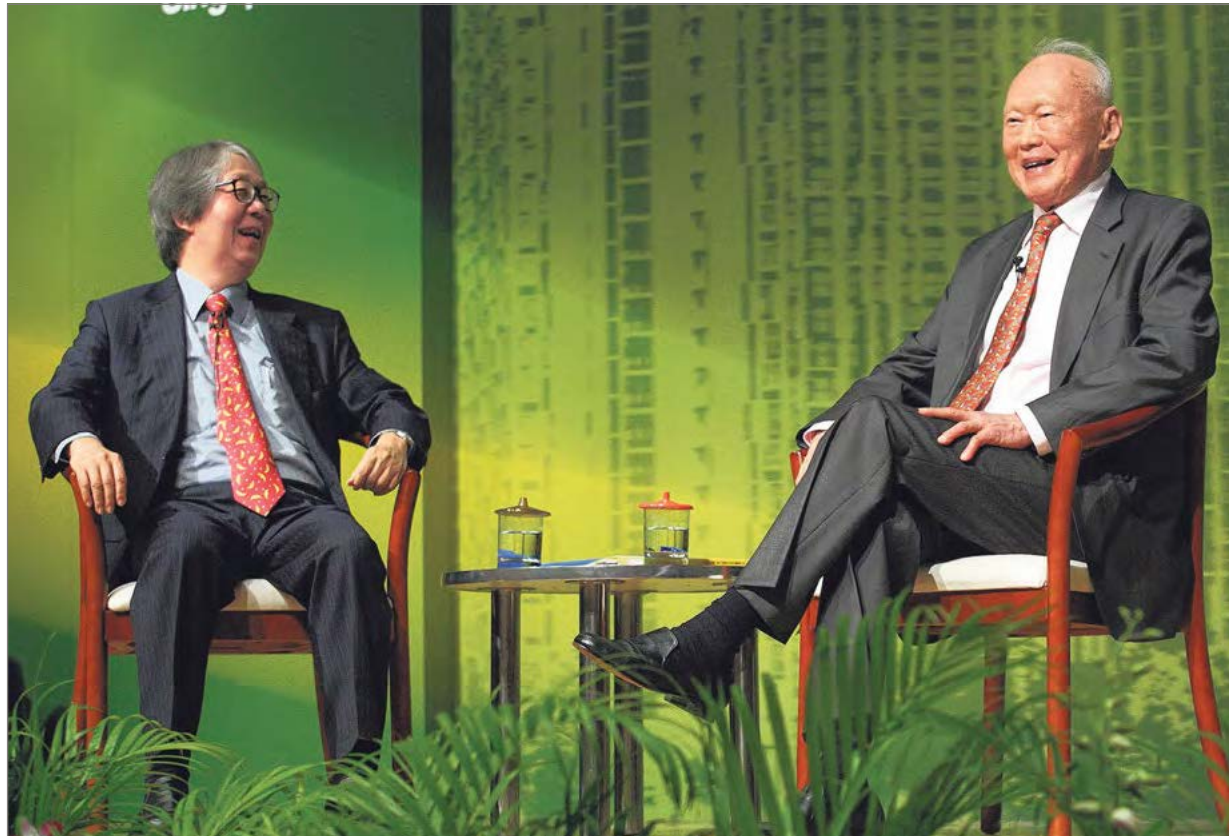
Later, as senior minister and minister mentor, he continued to give his successors valuable advice on our external relations. It would not be wrong to say that he served as our chief diplomat to the world.

Singapore is a very small country. However, it enjoys a role and influence in the world not enjoyed by other countries of similar size. A British newspaper once wrote that Singapore punches above its weight. This is due to three factors: our record of domestic achievements, our skilful diplomacy and the Lee Kuan Yew factor.

Why was Mr Lee so greatly admired by foreign leaders? Because of his intellectual brilliance, his power of analysis and judgment, his eloquence and charisma, and his willingness to share his candid and disinterested views. His longevity also gave him an advantage as he evolved from being the brilliant Prime Minister of Singapore to being a wise elder statesman.

Mr Lee travelled extensively on behalf of Singapore. He befriended and earned the respect of many foreign leaders, in government, business and academia. He had an impressive global network. For example, he was respected by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, German leader Helmut Schmidt, French leader Jacques Chirac and Japanese leader Kichii Miyazawa. He knew and was respected by every American president, from Lyndon Johnson to Barack Obama. Two of America's thought leaders, Dr Henry Kissinger and Dr George Shultz, are among his many admirers.

One of the greatest honours the United States can confer on a foreign leader is an invitation to address a joint session of the US Congress. I will never forget Oct 9, 1985. On that beautiful autumn day, Mr Lee addressed a packed



JAN 27, 2010: Professor Tommy Koh and Mr Lee at a conference to celebrate the HDB's 50th year. Singapore punches above its weight because of its domestic achievements, skilful diplomacy and the Lee Kuan Yew factor. ST FILE PHOTO

joint session of Congress.

At that time, the protectionist tide was running strong in the US body politic. In his speech, which received several standing ovations, he explained why it was in the strategic interest of the US to continue to support free trade and open economies. The senator sitting next to me, Mr Edward Kennedy, confided in me afterwards that he was not previously aware of the linkage between free trade and US strategic interests in the world. The speech did help to stem the tide of protectionism in the US Congress.

Mr Lee's enduring contribution to Singapore's foreign policy can be summed up in the following seven principles.

1 PRAGMATISM

First, our foreign policy is based on pragmatism and not on any doctrine or ideology. The scholars who have written that Singapore's foreign policy is based on realism are mistaken. If it were based on realism, we

would not have attached so much importance to international law or to the United Nations. Our constant lodestar is to promote the security and prosperity of Singapore.

2 SELF-RELIANCE

Second, we rely, first and foremost, on ourselves. Believing that the world does not owe us a living, Singapore did not seek foreign aid from the developed countries. We did not want to develop a dependency mentality. Instead, we concentrated our energies on attracting foreign investment and creating jobs for our people. We started building up our armed forces and introduced national service in order to develop a capacity to deter aggression.

3 ACCEPT REALITIES

Third, we accept the world as it is and not as we would like it to be. We have no illusions about the world. We take a clinical attitude towards facts and realities. This does not mean that we are passive

and fatalistic. Not at all. We have been extremely proactive in taking the leadership to form such groupings as the Forum of Small States and the Global Governance Group. We know that we live in an unfair and dangerous world. We know that small countries will always be vulnerable to the pressures of bigger countries.

4 ASEAN'S CENTRALITY

Fourth, Singapore has a fundamental commitment to ASEAN and to making South-east Asia a region of peace and prosperity. Singapore is a strong supporter of ASEAN integration and is working closely with our partners to ensure the successful transition from an association to a community by this year. We took an active part in drafting the ASEAN Charter and support ASEAN's ambition to become a more rules-based institution. Singapore strongly supports the central role which ASEAN plays in the regional architecture. We will do everything within our power to ensure

that ASEAN remains united, independent and neutral.

5 ASIA-PACIFIC COMMUNITY

Fifth, Singapore is committed to the vision of building an Asia-Pacific community. Singapore wants a balance of power in the region and welcomes the positive roles which the US, China, Japan, India, the European Union and Russia play in the political, economic and cultural lives of the region.

Singapore supports trade liberalisation and regional economic integration through both the Trans-Pacific Partnership, under the aegis of APEC, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Singapore supports dialogue, confidence-building and co-operation via institutions such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit.

6 BE A CONTRARIAN

Sixth, Singapore should not be afraid to defy conventional wisdom. During the 1960s, Singapore welcomed foreign investment by multinational corporations when the rest of the Third World viewed them as the purveyors of evil. Singapore was not afraid to be criticised by its ASEAN partners when it decided to negotiate a free trade agreement with the US. Singapore was willing to welcome the US military presence in the region when it was forced to leave the Philippines.

7 BE A GOOD GLOBAL CITIZEN

Seventh, Singapore should try to be a good global citizen. Within ASEAN, Singapore has played a leading role in trying to narrow the gap between the old and new members. Singapore maintains training centres in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam to train the government officials of those countries. This was the Singapore Cooperation Programme, run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Singapore trains 7,000 government officials from other countries annually. To date, Singapore has trained 80,000 government officials from 170 countries.

Ambassador-at-large Tommy Koh, 77, is an international lawyer, a diplomat and a former law faculty dean

By HENG SWEET KEAT

MR LEE Kuan Yew had a red box. When I worked as Mr Lee's principal private secretary, or PPS, a good part of my daily life revolved around the red box. Before Mr Lee came in to work each day, the locked red box would arrive first, at about 9am.

As far as the various officers who have worked with Mr Lee can remember, he had it for many, many years. It is a large, boxy briefcase, about 14cm wide. Red boxes came from the British government, whose ministers used them for transporting documents between government offices.

Our early ministers had red boxes, but Mr Lee is the only one I know who used his consistently through the years.

When I started working for Mr Lee in 1997, it was the first time I saw a red box in use. It is called the red box but is more a deep wine colour, like the seats in the chamber in Parliament House.

This red box held what Mr Lee was working on at any one time. Through the years, it held his papers, speech drafts, letters, readings, and a whole range of questions, reflections and observations. For example, in the years that Mr Lee was working on his memoirs, the red box carried the multiple early drafts back and forth between his home and the office, scribbled over with his and Mrs Lee's notes.

For a long time, other regular items in Mr Lee's red box were the cassette tapes that held his dictated instructions and thoughts for later transcription. Some years back, he changed to using a digital recorder.

The red box carried a wide range of items. It could be communications with foreign leaders, observations about the financial crisis, instructions for the Istana grounds staff, or even questions about some trees he had seen on the expressway.

Mr Lee was well-known for keeping extremely alert to everything he saw and heard around him - when he noticed something wrong, like an ailing raintree, a note in the red box would follow.

We could never anticipate what Mr Lee would raise - it could be anything that was happening in Singapore or the world. But we could be sure of this: It would always be about how events could affect Singapore and Singaporeans, and how we had to stay a step ahead.

Inside the red box was always something about how we could create a better life for all.

We would get to work right away. Mr Lee's secretaries would transcribe his dictated notes, while I followed up on instructions that required coordination across multiple government agencies. Our aim was to do as much as we could by the time Mr Lee came into the office later.

While we did this, Mr Lee would be working from home. For example, during the time that I worked with him (1997-2000), the Asian financial crisis ravaged many economies in our region and unleashed political changes. It was a tense period as no one could tell how events would unfold. Often, I would get a call from him to check certain facts or arrange meetings with financial experts.

In the years that I worked for him, Mr Lee's daily breakfast was a bowl of dou hua (soft bean curd)



PHOTO: MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

with no syrup. It was picked up and brought home in a tiffin carrier every morning from a food centre near Mr Lee's home. He washed it down with room-temperature water. Mr Lee did not take coffee or tea at breakfast.

While Mrs Lee was still alive, she used to drop by the Istana at the end of the day, in order to catch a few minutes together with Mr Lee, just to sit and look at the Istana trees that they both loved. They chatted about what many other old couples would talk about. They discussed what they should have for dinner, or how

their grandchildren were doing. Then back home went Mr Lee, Mrs Lee and the red box. After dinner, Mr and Mrs Lee liked to take a long stroll. In his days as Prime Minister, while Mrs Lee strolled, Mr Lee liked to ride a bicycle. It was, in the words of those who saw it, "one of those old man bicycles".

None of us who have worked at the Istana can remember him ever changing his bicycle. He did not use it in his later years, as he became frail, but I believe the "old man bicycle" is still around somewhere.

Based on the day's events and instructions, I tried to get ready the materials that Mr Lee might need. It sometimes took longer than I expected, and occasionally, I had to ask the security officer to come back for the red box later.

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Evening was Mr Lee's exercise time. Mr Lee has described his extensive and disciplined exercise regime elsewhere. It included the treadmill, rowing, swimming and walking - with his ears peeled to the evening news or his Mandarin practice tapes. He would sometimes take phone calls while exercising.

He was in his 70s then. In more recent years, being less stable on his feet, Mr Lee had a simpler exercise regime. But he continued to exercise.

Since retiring from the Minister Mentor position in 2011, Mr Lee was more relaxed during his exercises. Instead of listening intently to the news or taking phone calls, he shared his personal stories and joked with his staff.

While Mr Lee exercised, those of us in the office would use that time to focus once again on the red box, to get ready all the day's work for Mr Lee to take home with him in the evening.



APRIL 29, 2011: Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew talking to residents of Tampines GRC before the 2011 General Election. With him are two of PAP's candidates for Tampines GRC, Mr Heng Swee Keat and Ms Irene Ng. ST FILE PHOTOS



MARCH 25, 1999: Mr Heng (fourth from left) with Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew on a trip to New Zealand where they met Ms Helen Clark, who was then leader of the opposition.

Mr Lee's red box and his unwavering dedication to Singapore

worked. They liked to put on classical music while they stayed up.

In his days as PM, Mr Lee's average bedtime was 3.30 in the morning. As Senior Minister and Minister Mentor, he went to sleep after two in the morning. If he had to travel for an official visit the next day, he might go to bed at one or two in the morning.

Deep into the night, while the rest of Singapore slept, it was common for Mr Lee to be in full work mode.

Before he went to bed, Mr Lee would put everything he had completed back in the red box, with clear pointers on what he wished for us to do in the office. The last thing he did each day was to place the red box outside his study room.

The next morning, the duty security team picked up the red box, brought it to us waiting in the office, and a new day would begin.

Let me share two other stories involving the red box.

In 1996, Mr Lee underwent balloon angioplasty to insert a stent. It was his second heart operation in two months, after an earlier operation to widen a coronary artery did not work. After the operation, he was put in the intensive care unit for observation.

When he regained consciousness and could sit up in bed, he asked for his security team. The security officer hurried into the room to find out what was needed. Mr Lee asked: "Can you pass me the red box?"

Even at that point, Mr Lee's first thought was to continue working. The security officer rushed the red box in, and Mr Lee asked to be left to his work. The nurses told the security team that other patients of his age, in Mr Lee's condition, would just rest. Mr Lee was 72 at the time.

In 2010, Mr Lee was hospital-

ised again, this time for a chest infection. While he was in the hospital, Mrs Lee passed away. Mr Lee has spoken about his grief at Mrs Lee's passing. As soon as he could, he left the hospital to attend the wake at Sri Temasek.

At the end of the night, he was under doctor's orders to return to the hospital. But he asked his security team if they could take him to the Singapore River instead.

It was late in the night, and Mr Lee was in mourning. His security team hastened to give a bereaved husband a quiet moment to himself.

As Mr Lee walked slowly along the bank of the Singapore River, the way he and Mrs Lee sometimes did when she was still alive, he paused. He beckoned a security officer over. Then he pointed out some trash floating on the river, and asked: "Can you take a photo of that? I'll tell my PPS what to do about it tomorrow." Photo taken, he returned to the hospital.

I was no longer Mr Lee's PPS at the time. I had moved on to the Monetary Authority of Singapore, to continue with the work to strengthen our financial regulatory system that Mr Lee had started in the late 1990s.

But I can guess that Mr Lee probably had some feedback on keeping the Singapore River clean. I can also guess that the picture and the instructions were ferried in Mr Lee's red box the next morning to the office. Even as Mr Lee lay in the hospital. Even as Mrs Lee lay in state.

The security officers with Mr Lee were deeply touched. When I heard about these moments, I was also moved.

I have taken some time to describe Mr Lee's red box. The reason is that, for me, it symbolises Mr Lee's unwavering dedication to Singapore so well.

The diverse contents it held tell us much about the breadth of Mr Lee's concerns - from the very big to the very small, the daily routine of the red box tells us how Mr Lee's life revolved around making Singapore better, in ways big and small.

By the time I served Mr Lee, he was the Senior Minister. Yet, he continued to devote all his time to thinking about the future of Singapore. I could only imagine what he was like as Prime Minister.

In policy and strategy terms, he was always driving himself, Lee and all our colleagues to think about what each trend and development meant for Singapore, and how we should respond to it in order to secure Singapore's well-being and success.

As his PPS, I saw the punishing pace of work that Mr Lee set himself. I had a boss whose every thought and every action was for Singapore.

But it takes private moments like these to bring home just how entirely Mr Lee devoted his life to Singapore.

In fact, I think the best description comes from the security officer who was with Mr Lee both of those times. He was on Mr Lee's team for almost 30 years. He said of Mr Lee: "Mr Lee is always country, country, country. And country."

This year, Singapore turns 50. Mr Lee would have turned 92 this September. Mr Lee entered the hospital on Feb 5, 2015. He continued to use his red box every day until Feb 4, 2015.

The world will miss Lee Kuan Yew

By HENRY KISSINGER

LEE Kuan Yew was a great man. And he was a close personal friend, a fact that I consider one of the great blessings of my life. A world needing to distil order from incipient chaos will miss his leadership.

Lee emerged onto the international stage as the founding father of the state of Singapore, then a city of about one million. He developed into a world statesman who acted as a kind of conscience to leaders around the globe.

Fate initially seemed not to have provided him a canvas on which to achieve more than modest local success.

In the first phase of decolonisation, Singapore emerged as a part of Malaysia. It was cut loose because of tensions between Singapore's largely Chinese population and the Malay majority and, above all, to teach the fractious city a lesson of dependency. Malaysia undoubtedly expected that reality would cure Singapore of its independent spirit.

But great men become such through visions beyond material calculations. Lee defied conventional wisdom by opting for statehood. The choice reflected a deep faith in the virtues of his people.

He asserted that a city located on a sandbar with nary an economic resource to draw upon, and whose major industry as a colonial naval base had disappeared, could nevertheless thrive and achieve international stature by building on its principal asset: the intelligence, industry and dedication of its people.

A great leader takes his or her society from where it is to where it has never been. I think of him as yet cannot imagine being, by insisting on quality education, by suppressing corruption and by basing governance on merit, Lee and his colleagues raised the annual per capita income of their population from US\$500 at the time of independence in 1965 to roughly US\$55,000 today.

In generation, Singapore became an international financial



OCT 27, 2009: Dr Henry Kissinger with Mr Lee Kuan Yew at the US-ASEAN Business Council's 25th anniversary gala dinner, where Mr Lee was awarded a lifetime achievement award for fostering US-ASEAN ties. ST FILE PHOTO

centre, the leading intellectual metropolis of South-east Asia, the location of the region's major hospitals and a favoured site for conferences on international affairs.

It did so by adhering to an extraordinary pragmatism: by opening careers to the best talents and

encouraging them to adopt the best practices from all over the world.

Superior performance was one component of that achievement. Superior leadership was even more important. As the decades went by, it was moving - and in-

spirational - to see Lee, in material terms the mayor of a medium-sized city, stride the international scene as a mentor of global strategic order.

A visit by Lee to Washington was a kind of national event. A presidential conversation was nearly automatic; eminent members of the Cabinet and Congress would seek meetings. They did so not to hear of Singapore's national problems; Lee rarely, if ever, lobbied policymakers for assistance. His theme was the indispensable US contribution to the defence and growth of a peaceful world. His interlocutors attended not to be petitioned but to learn from one of the truly profound global thinkers of our time.

This process started for me when Lee visited Harvard in 1967 shortly after becoming Prime Minister of an independent Singapore. Lee began a meeting with the senior faculty of the School of Public Administration (now the Kennedy School) by inviting comments on the Vietnam War.

The faculty, of which I was one dissenting member, was divided primarily on the question of whether President Lyndon Johnson was a war criminal or a psychopath.

Lee responded: "You make me sick" - not because he embraced war in a personal sense but because the independence and prosperity of his country depended on the fortitude, unity and resolve of the United States.

Singapore was not asking the United States to do something that Singapore would not undertake to the maximum of its ability. But US leadership was needed to supplement and create a framework for order in the world.

Lee elaborated on these themes in the hundreds of encounters I had with him during international conferences, study groups, board meetings, face-to-face discussions and visits at each other's homes over 45 years.

He did not exhort; he was never emotional; he was not a Cold Warrior; he was a pilgrim in quest of world order and responsible

IMAGES: BY ST PHOTOGRAPHERS

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015

Mr Lee enjoying a snack while watching the 2001 National Day Parade from the VIP lounge at the National Stadium.
ST PHOTO: GEORGE GASCON



Mr Lee gets a kiss from Dr. Kanwaljit Soin, founder of the Women's Initiative for Ageing Successfully, during a gala dinner on July 18, 2007, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the International Women's Forum Singapore chapter.



Mr Lee joins thousands of other volunteers to sweep the streets on the last day of the week-long mass clean-up campaign in 1959.
ST PHOTO: WAN SENG YIP

Every photographer's dream... and nightmare

He refused to pose for shots but was unfailingly expressive

By STEPHANIE YEOW
PICTURE EDITOR

I BEGAN photographing Mr Lee Kuan Yew soon after I joined The Straits Times in 1995, and over

the next 20 years, I photographed him extensively for news assignments and the 2011 book *Hard Truths To Keep Singapore Going*. I also accompanied him on official trips overseas. Mr Lee was every

photographer's dream and nightmare.

He was ever intimidating, impatient with the time-sapping craft of photography. His aversion to flash photography, especially in his later years, meant that photographers had less than a minute to shoot, before being asked to turn off their flashes.

Mr Lee was not one to pose. He never fussed over his public

image. He refused to be staged. Not ready? You missed the shot. I don't remember anyone ever calling out to him to look in their direction, the way press photographers routinely cajole other politicians.

In 2013, when he received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the National University of Singapore, one photographer bravely beckoned him to hold up

his newly minted scroll. Squaring his shoulders, Mr Lee replied: "I will hold it my way."

On the occasions I photographed the Lee family, including their Chinese New Year reunion dinner in 2011 and 2013, I noted that even his extended family members held him in awe. Once, they unanimously applauded when he entered the room. Everyone arranged themselves for the

reunion photograph, then he strode in to take his place. A few clicks later, dinner was served.

Yet, having said all that, Mr Lee was every photojournalist's dream subject.

There were no dull, impassive interviews. No hemming, no hawing. No ambiguity. He was unfailingly expressive. His was raw emotion at work, with that trademark wagging finger, clenched fist and

throaty guffaw.

In 2013, while putting together the *Lee Kuan Yew - A Life In Pictures* book, I was given access to more than 20 large boxes of the Lee family's photo albums. It was like Christmas come early for me. What a privilege it was to leaf through thousands of never-before-seen images chronicling his most personal and private moments.

There were hundreds of well-documented official overseas trips he made as Prime Minister, Senior Minister and Minister Mentor, growing up photos of the Lee children flashing toothy grins in their Oxley Road home, donning graduation gowns, getting married and having children themselves. What struck me was how ordinary this extraordinary family's photo album was, what

everyday milestones it covered.

I was also taken by how most of the photos were diligently captioned in neat handwriting by Mrs Lee, detailing where and when they were shot. She obviously cherished every moment of bringing up her children and grandchildren.

When I presented a copy of *A Life In Pictures* to Mr Lee in 2013, he peered at it with interest. He

was approaching 90 then. But the years faded away as he lingered on a shot of him and his children playing with their dog at the Istana. "I should have been 40 here," he reminisced, and went on to recall his children's ages then.

It was a moment I will always hold close to my heart, and which I will share with my children and grandchildren.

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Mr Lee, accompanied by security personnel, on a morning jog outside his hotel in Shanghai, while on a 13-day trip to China in 1985. ST PHOTO: FRANCIS ONG



(Left) Mr Lee in his office at the Istana Annex.
ST PHOTO: GEORGE GASCON



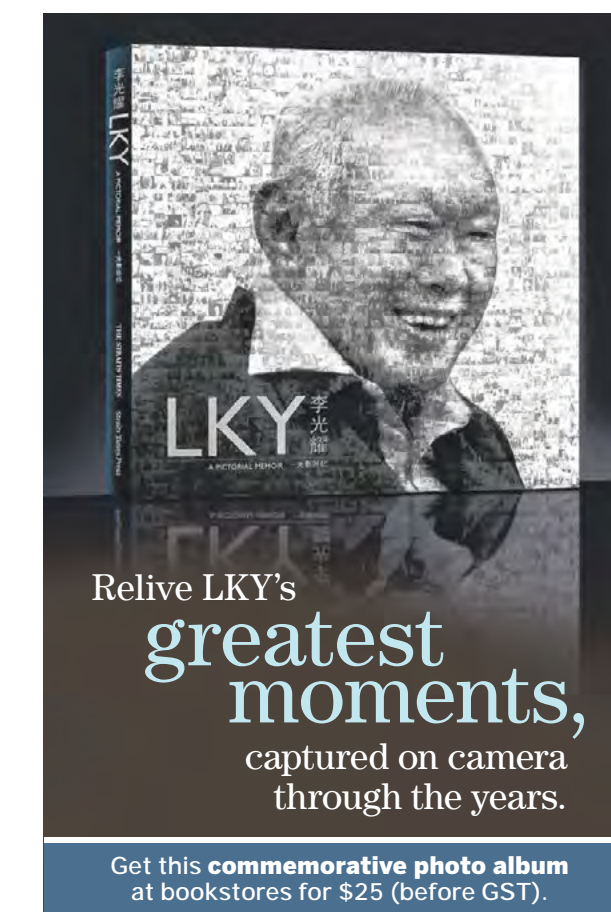
(Right) Mr Lee receiving a standing ovation during an event to mark the 60th anniversary of the PAP's founding at Victoria Concert Hall on Nov 7 last year.
ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA



(From left) Mrs Lee, Mr Lee, Mrs Pamela Lee and Dr Lee Suan Yew tossing yu sheng at a reunion dinner at Mandarin Court restaurant on Feb 4, 2000. ST PHOTO: GEORGE GASCON



Mr Lee laughing at the thrill of being carried in a sedan chair to the top of Huangshan, a mountain range in Anhui province in eastern China, during his visit in October 1992. ST PHOTO: ALBERT SIM



THE LEE KUAN YEW I REMEMBER

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015

AUG 9, 2010: MM Lee with Prof Jayakumar at the National Day Parade. ST FILE PHOTO

S. Jayakumar, 75, consultant, Drew & Napier, was an MP from 1980 to 2011, a Cabinet minister from 1984

Multiracial S'pore
on the world stage

MR LEE Kuan Yew had a strong view on how we should conduct ourselves on the international stage and how

we wanted others to perceive Singapore.

He had many views in this regard, but let me single out one aspect which made a great impression on me – that we should always get others to view us as a multiracial country.

Once, after he came back from an overseas visit, he asked at a Cabinet

meeting who was the Transport Minister. Turning to him, he said he had just come back after a long flight on Singapore Airlines (SIA), and among the in-flight service crew, there were no Malays, Indians or Eurasians.

He asked the minister to convey feedback to SIA that foreigners

to 2011, including Deputy PM from 2004 to 2009 and Senior Minister from 2009 to 2011

travelling on the national carrier would form an impression of Singapore. It was not good that the in-flight crew were all ethnic Chinese. He said SIA should do its best to have Malays, Indians and Eurasians.

In a similar vein, he would from time to time comment on Cabinet

memoranda from ministers seeking approval to send delegations to represent Singapore at important international conferences. He would turn to the minister who put up the Cabinet paper and ask about the list of officials proposed for the delegation. He would say: "Look, they are going to represent

Singapore, right? Surely your ministry can find a good Malay or Indian officer to be included?" Often, the minister would withdraw the memorandum and resubmit later an amended delegation list. His determination to portray abroad Singapore's multiracial aspect had a profound impact on me.



SEPTEMBER 1988: Prof Jayakumar, with PM Lee, greeting Chinese Premier Li Peng during an official visit to China. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A man of
exceptional
intellect and
perception

Mr Lee had strong views but could be persuaded to change his mind

Richard Hu, 88, served as Finance Minister from 1985 to 2001

IN THE lead-up to the 1984 General Election, after I finally agreed to enter politics, Kuan Yew invited me to his office at the Istana.

It was a spartan room, which reflected the character of the man. He did not believe in spending money unless it was absolutely necessary. The room was just plain, except for some books on the shelves.

In the Cabinet room, one floor below his office, the table has been there for as long as I remember. The cloth covers of the armchairs were finally changed three or four years before he retired. He had previously refused to do so.

It got to a point where his colleagues were embarrassed that visitors might think the Singapore Government had no money. But to him, these things mattered little. His primary interest was in making sure the economy grew and the people benefited.

Kuan Yew was relaxed in that first meeting. He wanted to allay any lingering concerns I had about entering politics and to make me feel comfortable about taking the leap. That meeting marked the beginning of a friendship that lasted three decades, including 17 years as Cabinet colleagues.

I had heard a lot about Kuan Yew before that, of course, but from actually interacting with him, I found him to be a man of exceptional intellect and perception. He had what I would call helicopter qualities – the ability to rise above the masses and look at things from a higher perspective, to not get confused by the forest.

As a lawyer, he had not received formal training in economic and financial matters. But he more than made up for it with an acute mind with the ability to calculate implications, as well as by reading widely.

He also had a strong intuitive sense on the principles of macroeconomics and how nations moved up. He agreed with Dr Goh Keng Swee early on that it was important to have an open economy that attracted the investments of multinational corporations. Later on, he could see that low-cost countries were moving up, and I consequently worked with him to grow our services sector in order to stay competitive – financial, legal, business services and so on.

He had a vision of how Singapore was going to create jobs and stay one step ahead of other developing countries and he was not afraid to try different strategies. They turned out to be extremely successful.

After I entered politics, Kuan Yew and I would meet regularly for one-on-one lunches. He had simple eating habits. There would be soup – usually vegetable soup – followed by fish or steak. He loved a good steak – about 120g, lean with all the fat cut out. Finally, there would be fruit. He was convinced about the benefits of anti-

oxidants in fruit.

His favourite fruit was pomelo and he would say to me: "You eat it too. It's good for you."

He was a health nut. He would swim or cycle daily and kept telling me during our lunches that I should be exercising to keep fit, so I would last longer.

In this environment, he was quite friendly. We would discuss the issues of the day: policy matters, primarily financial ones, as well as international developments. One thing he did not discuss with me, though, was domestic or electoral politics.

He discussed this with other ministers because he knew this is not my area. I was never much interested in politics in the partisan or electoral sense. He understood that and kept me out of it.

Other than these one-on-one lunch meetings, our discussions mainly took place during Cabinet meetings and during the annual Budget meeting between the Finance Minister (after I took up this portfolio in 1985) and the Prime Minister.

I would prepare a paper laying out the important tax changes in the Budget. Because tax issues were very sensitive, we did not want to discuss them openly, even at the Cabinet level. For example, if we were going to increase petrol or tobacco taxes, any leak would be very problematic.

The role of Finance Minister in Singapore is relatively straightforward, unlike in other countries where finance ministers have to fight with central bankers because one side wants to spend and the other side wants to control.

Because the issues were less complicated, Kuan Yew and I rarely found ourselves in disagreement or having to debate an issue very vigorously, except on one issue: whether we should internationalise the Singapore dollar.

This debate happened in the 1980s. The big international banks at the time wanted greater access to the Singapore dollar, which they saw as a strong and stable currency – almost as strong as the US dollar and more familiar to people in this region. They proposed to Kuan Yew to allow the Singapore dollar to be borrowed for use in large amounts outside Singapore – say, to fund Indonesian development projects.

A few years before this, these banks proposed that a US-dollar offshore market be established in Singapore. We allowed this and it worked very well. It was the first step in our move towards developing Singapore as a financial centre. Those banks saw the internationalisation of the Singapore dollar as the logical next step.

As chairman of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, I, together with the MAS leadership, was totally opposed to this proposal. We felt that once borrowing outside Singapore was allowed, there would be pressure on the mint to print more money, in excess to the GDP requirements in Singapore. Over time, if more and more foreign



Former finance minister Richard Hu offering his condolences to PM Lee yesterday. With them are the PM's wife, Ms Ho Ching (left), Dr Hu recalls that Mr Lee Kuan Yew's primary interest had been in making sure the economy grew and the people benefited. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN



SEPT 19, 1985: Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang (right) greeting Finance Minister Richard Hu in Beijing as Mr Lee looked on. With them were (from left) Minister of State for Community Development and Communications and Information Wong Kan Seng, Mrs Mary Tan, Trade and Industry Minister Tony Tan and Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam. ST FILE PHOTO

A LEADER WITH HELICOPTER QUALITIES

"He had what I would call helicopter qualities – the ability to rise above the masses and look at things from a higher perspective, to not get confused by the forest."

– Dr Richard Hu on Mr Lee

eign entities held large quantities of Singapore dollars offshore, a mischievous speculator with enough resources would, in theory, be able to undermine our currency by selling down and then

buying back.

This was in fact what happened to the British pound at one point and, later, to the Thai baht during the 1997 financial crisis.

Keng Swee, who had retired,

supported my view on this issue. But it took a lot to bring Kuan Yew round. He asked if we could allow some internationalisation to happen initially, and then to gradually build up. I maintained that once you opened the door, it was difficult to stop it.

There was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing between the two of us. He was a night burner who worked into the wee hours of the morning. Often, he would think nothing of calling me up at midnight to ask me about a particular detail or to get me to elaborate on a certain point.

In the end, we were able to convince him that Singapore could become a financial centre without internationalising our currency – by developing other financial services in parallel that could provide just as good benefits, if not better.

What I learnt from this exchange about Kuan Yew was that he could be persuaded. On many issues, he had strong views and would try to dominate. Often, I saw him challenge proposals put forward by ministers at Cabinet meetings. But he was never so locked in to a particular view that he could not change his mind.

To his Chinese tutor, he was a 'gentle lion'



JULY 14, 2007: Dr Koh showing Mr Lee a wooden sculpture during the official opening of the Confucius Institute at the NTU@one-north campus. Next to Dr Koh is Mr Kong Fan Biao, the craftsman from China who carved the sculpture. ST FILE PHOTO

Koh Hock Kiat, 54, is the former director of the Confucius Institute at the Nanyang Technological University

I STILL remember clearly the first Chinese lesson I conducted for Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

It was a rainy day in 2006. Even though I was well-prepared, I was slightly nervous as I stepped into the Istana to make my way to his office, where the lesson was to be held.

Mr Lee, after all, was Singapore's founding father. Many viewed him as a stern man, not to be crossed, a "shi zi" (lion), as some would say in Chinese.

My nervousness was very quickly dispelled. As a student, he was humble and easy-going. He never hesitated to ask questions, and these were not just about Chinese language and culture.

He wanted to know too what I thought about issues like China and its rapid rise.

He also never stood on ceremony. Once, we did a lesson at the Singapore General Hospital because he was hospitalised there. He was in good spirits and appeared in a shirt and shorts.

I always began lessons by asking him how he was. This lightened the mood and was a good way for him to warm up before we moved on to converse about other topics.

Often, the topics were related to current affairs. We would read news articles or commentaries in Lianhe Zaobao or in newspapers from China and Taiwan, and then discuss them.

We stopped from time to time if he needed to clarify the meaning of a word or a term, or if there was a pronunciation that he had to go over a few more times.

But otherwise, we let the conversation flow freely to mimic as far as possible a natural conversation he might hold with his Chinese-speaking guests.

I enjoyed these conversations immensely as they often provided a glimpse of a side to Mr Lee that I would come to admire very much.

His sentimentality was quite evident, for example, when he recalled, with much nostalgia, his friendship with Chiang Ching-kuo. He would talk about the two stone lions he had received as a gift from the late Taiwanese leader and remind us of how Chiang had generously acceded to a request to allow the Singapore Armed Forces to train in Taiwan.

He also treasured memories of his days in Britain. When I e-mailed him one year to wish him well on his birthday, he replied in a long e-mail that he was dining in a restaurant in London.

It was a restaurant he had been to as a student and which he liked a lot. It had not changed at all, he

wrote with much delight.

With age, Mr Lee spoke more slowly and softly than he used to.

But whenever he began talking about an issue related to Singapore's survival or well-being, he would become excited, his tone moving up a notch.

Discussing Singapore transformed him into a young man, I remember thinking to myself.

Mr Lee's interest in the Chinese language is well-documented. It dates back to the 1950s, shortly after he entered politics.

In his later years, however, he showed a desire to learn more, not just of the language – for conversational and speech-making purposes – but of Chinese culture as well.

He wanted to talk about Chinese geography and the cultural significance of various sayings and art forms. I have always believed in an approach to learning Chinese that balances linguistic skills with cultural knowledge.

For me, this shift he made in his later years was evidence that he had matured in his journey as a student of Chinese.

When Mrs Lee passed away in 2010, our Chinese lessons were put on hold. It would have been understandable if Mr Lee had decided then to permanently set aside the classes. But remarkably, within a month, he chose to resume lessons, and at a normal frequency, no less.

Even in the later years, when his health did not permit for lessons to be held as frequently, he never completely gave them up. Sometimes, when he got tired, he would ask to rest for 30 minutes before resuming the lesson.

There was a determination and a fighting spirit in him that I saw, not just in the learning of Chinese, but in other areas of his life – such as in his refusal to allow his security officers to aid him in walking.

But above all, I remember Mr Lee most fondly for the kindness he never failed to show to the people around him.

Twice a year, he would host dinners for his Chinese teachers, security officers, doctors and nurses to show his gratitude. When his books were published, he would autograph a copy for each of his Chinese teachers.

Often, he would also return from his overseas trips with gifts for us. When the Chinese leader Hu Jintao gave him some pu'er tea, he gave it all to us – after asking us for the significance of the tea – along with a teapot, which was a gift from another official.

And so, even though for many Singaporeans the thought of Mr Lee will continue to bring to mind images of a forbidding lion, for those who had the privilege of interacting with him at close quarters, he was a gentle and compassionate lion.



SPH chief executive Alan Chan (with grey tie) looks on as then Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew struck the gong to start a Chinese cultural festival presented by Lianhe Zaobao newspaper and the Singapore Chinese Chamber Of Commerce & Industry. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Journey with a master teacher

Alan Chan Heng Loon, 62, is the chief executive of Singapore Press Holdings. He worked in the Government for 25 years, holding posts such as permanent secretary and principal private secretary to then Senior Minister Lee.

I had started reading Nanyang Siang Pau at the age of seven and that I read every copy of the Yazhou Zhoukan, Asia Weekly.

After about 30 minutes, he said: "Okay, you go and take the written account." And I was selected.

Just one week after I became his PPS, I followed him to Taiwan where he met his leaders.

The discussion lasted from 10am to 10pm. I was taking notes. Mr Lee told me to give him the minutes the following morning – verbatim. I stayed up that night to write the minutes, and when he read them the next morning, he said: "Alan, you passed."

In 1994, Mr Lee tasked me to help him monitor the progress of the Suzhou Industrial Park project. I also had to carry his messages to Chinese officials and convey their responses back to him. The Chinese used to laugh and call me "yu chai da ren" (the royal messenger).

During my stint as Mr Lee's PPS, the liberalisation of the financial and banking sector was also in the works. Almost every other evening, he would meet 10 bankers and quiz them on a specific topic. If he liked a banker's proposal, he would tell the man: "Write me a paper on this. Elaborate on the points."

Only the manager of the town council in question and one minister

other nine bankers for comments. So for every paper that came in, there would be nine others as well. I had to sift through this information and organise it for myself – and sometimes I found myself lost in it. But he could read all 10 papers, distil the ideas and tell me which ones were worth pursuing.

He wanted the maximum possible opinions on a particular subject.

I was by Mr Lee's side when he met Fang Chuang Pi, the former underground leader of the Malaysian Communist Party in Singapore, better known as "The Plen".

The meeting took place in 1995 in DiaoYutai, China. Mr Fang had a bag with him that, out of courtesy, we didn't search. There could have been anything inside that bag, though I believe it was probably just a tape recorder. Still, throughout the conversation, while I was taking minutes, I was actually watching that bag very, very closely. The two men knew and respected each other. But there was something Mr Fang asked for that Mr Lee could not grant. So it's a bit of a regret.

Mr Lee kept his ears close to the ground. At about 11 or 12 o'clock on a Saturday, he would say: "I'd like to visit a three-room flat in XYZ precinct at 4 o'clock."

Only the manager of the town council in question and one minister

try official would join him on the visit. The notice was so short that there was no time for anyone to gloss over the blemishes.

At the appointed hour, Mr Lee would walk around, inspecting the cleanliness and maintenance. Then he would go about gathering feedback from the ground. He would speak to families and people he met along corridors and ask pointed questions like: "What exactly do you do? How much do you earn?"

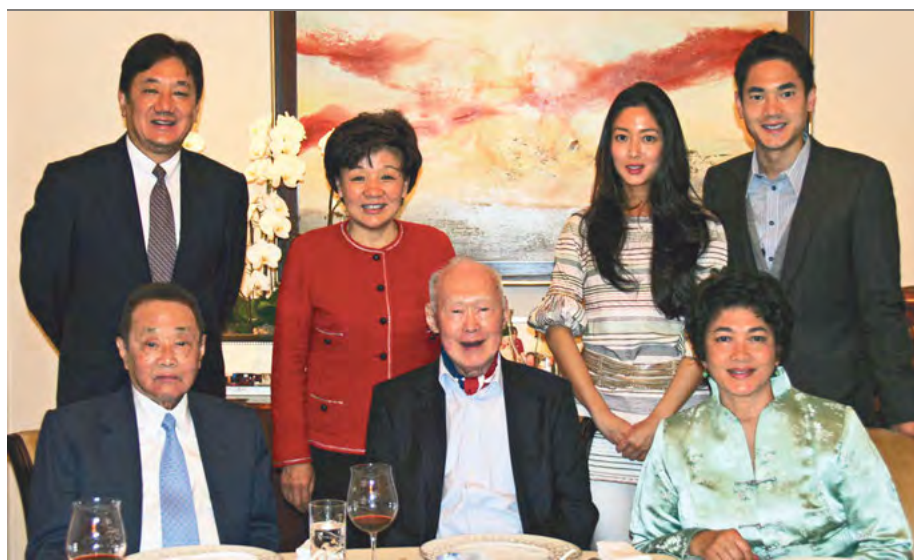
And wherever we went, whether it was India or Vietnam, he would always ask to visit a market. He told me: "When I walk around the market and I look at the availability of goods there, then I know whether that place is prosperous or poor."

He felt that while you can get everything in a five-star hotel, the local market was more of a distasteful of the economy.

In 1994, we were in Shenyang in Liaoning province when he asked a vendor where their pineapples were from. The answer was Taiwan. Mr Lee was taken by surprise: "Taiwan, not Hainan? You mean there is trade between China and Taiwan?"

The vendor said yes. So there were already pineapples from Taiwan in China in 1994. And Mr Lee, who always wanted to know what was going on, was able to ferret that out.

THE LEE KUAN YEW I REMEMBER

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015

APRIL 2011: Mr Robert Kuok (seated, left) and his wife (seated, in green) together with their family hosted a dinner for Mr Lee Kuan Yew during his visit to Hong Kong. Mr Kuok is an old friend of Mr Lee's.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MINISTER MENTOR'S OFFICE

'The greatest Chinese outside mainland China'

Robert Kuok, 91, is chairman of the Kerry Group, a Hong Kong-based conglomerate with varied interests

By LI XUEYING
HONG KONG CORRESPONDENT
IN HONG KONG

ON HIS regular visits to Hong Kong, Mr Lee Kuan Yew observed that when people there failed in business, they blamed themselves or bad luck, picked themselves up and tried again.

He wondered how to encourage that entrepreneurial spirit among Singaporeans, and would put the question to powerful businessmen he met there. South-east Asia's richest man, Mr Robert Kuok, remembers how he responded to Mr Lee: "I told

him, you have governed Singapore too strictly, you have put a straitjacket on Singapore. Now, you need to take a pair of scissors and cut it."

The Malaysian tycoon would sometimes invite other Hong Kong businessmen to meet Mr Lee, who was always ready to talk politics.

But on his last trip, in May 2012, Mr Lee was more subdued. His wife had died, and he visited another old friend, media mogul Run Run Shaw, who was ill. Mr Lee sat quietly by Sir Run Run's wheelchair, saying little but patting the centenarian's knee

from time to time.

"He had grown far more mellow," recalled Mr Kuok in an interview at his Deep Water Bay home in March 2013. It was a different side of a man he had known for seven decades.

They were born 20 days apart – Mr Lee on Sept 16 and Mr Kuok on Oct 6, 1923 – and met in 1941 as students at Raffles College in pre-war Singapore. "We're both pigs, born in the Year of the Pig," Mr Kuok said with a laugh, referring to the Chinese zodiac sign.

Did that make them stubborn? No, he said. "Greedy. See food, eat. See

ranging from property to palm oil

power, grab." From Hong Kong, Mr Kuok presides over an US\$11.4 billion (S\$15.4 billion) family business empire that spans the Shangri-La hotel chain to logistics to being the world's biggest processor of palm oil.

He said they were not especially close in school. Harry, as the young Mr Lee was known then, already had a reputation for pugnacity. "He was combative, wanting to win every argument. Not someone you would take an immediate great warmth and liking to," said Mr Kuok. And because Harry was "intellectually a cut above the average", there was "a slight

feeling of superiority" about him. He did not mix much, though he did attend the college's annual fancy dress ball in 1941 in Malay garb complete with a songkok. Mr Kuok went as a Mandarin.

On Dec 8 that year, their lives were disrupted when the first Japanese bomb landed, bringing World War II to Singapore.

Mr Kuok returned to Johor Baru, where his parents ran a shop selling rice, sugar and flour. By the time he returned to Singapore in 1955, he had established a sugar refining business that would be the foundation of his

fortune and earned him the title of Malaysia's Sugar King.

Mr Lee was a lawyer and rising politician, and a founder of the People's Action Party.

They would meet occasionally and Mr Kuok found Mr Lee "still pretty curt", but now he was obsessed with Singapore. In 1970, Mr Kuok received a call from the Istana inviting him to the Prime Minister's Office. Mr Lee wanted his views on Malaysia, saying his analyses were more down-to-earth than the official briefings he received. These meetings occurred regularly till 1973 when Mr

Kuok moved to Hong Kong. After that, they met mostly when Mr Lee visited Hong Kong.

"Over the years, he shed a lot of his stiffness," he said, though they did not agree on everything.

"Politically, I did not share all his views," revealed Mr Kuok, citing as an example the benchmarking of ministerial pay to the private sector.

He thought Mr Lee was too obsessed about Singapore. "He wanted to talk about politics all the time. There is more to life than politics. To me, there is more to life than business."

Yet it was Mr Lee's single-mindedness that made Singapore thrive, Mr Kuok acknowledged, and it helped that he possessed "all these strong leadership traits – an intimidating attitude, presence of face and body".

"He was very sure of himself, resolute, even ruthless. But he turned Singapore into a model nation, put in place a government that cared for its people, and made sure that others would not bully Singapore," he said. "The greatest Chinese outside the mainland is Lee Kuan Yew."

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DEC 30, 1996: (above) Mr Lee Kuan Yew giving a press conference after the PAP rally at the Esplanade next to UOB Plaza. Mr Lee said a scyphant, obsequious press would be worthless to him – it would have no credibility. PHOTO: BT FILE

SEPT 29, 2000: Mr Lee with then editor-in-chief Cheong Yip Seng when he visited Times House. The Straits Times' former headquarters in Kim Seng Road, to participate in a Web chat at ST Online. PHOTO: ST FILE

Press freedom was a fine balancing act with Mr Lee

Cheong Yip Seng, 71, former editor-in-chief of Singapore Press Holdings' English and Malay Newspapers Division, recalls the many run-ins

ONE November evening in 1999, Mr Lee Kuan Yew telephoned: He was troubled by a new information phenomenon, which was threatening to overwhelm the traditional media industry.

In America, the markets were rapidly coming to the conclusion that there was no future in print newspapers, whose eyeballs were migrating to cyberspace.

How would this information revolution impact the Singapore media? He was anxious to find a response that would enable the mainstream media to keep its eyeballs. He wanted us at Singapore Press Holdings to think about the way forward.

For him, the media was one of three institutions in Singapore he told an aide he needed to control in order to govern effectively. The other two were the Treasury and the armed forces.

His relations with the media had been rocky at the start of his political career. While he was in the opposition, not everyone in the press had sympathy for his political goals. The Malaysian Malay media, which could then circulate in Singapore, was hostile.

My first editor-in-chief, Mr Leslie Hoffman, had a furious row with him over freedom of

the press that blazed across the front pages of The Straits Times, and went all the way to the International Press Institute (IPI) annual assembly in 1959 in Berlin, where Mr Hoffman appealed for IPI support.

Once in office, Mr Lee set out to change the rules of the game. He and his government, not the press, would set the agenda for the country. They wanted command of the national narrative.

What did he want of the press in Singapore? He put it best in 1971 when he went to another IPI conference following another bitter confrontation with the Singapore media: "The mass media can help to present Singapore's problems simply and clearly, and then explain how if they support certain programmes and policies, these problems can be solved."

"More important, we want the mass media to reinforce, not undermine, the cultural values and social attitudes being inculcated in our schools and universities... The freedom of the press must be subordinated to the integrity of Singapore and the primacy of purpose of an elected government."

He wanted the press to help him if it thought his policies deserved support. The operative word was "if". He did not want blind support. A scyphant, obsequious press would be worthless to him, he would tell us on more than one occasion. It

would have no credibility.

In truth, most of his policies made sense. The list is long: Robust multinational corporation-led growth wiped out double-digit unemployment, widespread in the early years following independence.

Affordable public housing was easily available, made possible by large-scale land acquisition at below-market rates and use of the Central Provident Fund. An overhaul of the education system reduced once unacceptably high drop-out rates in schools so everyone could realise his full potential. Tough laws were introduced to ensure safety in the streets. Good housekeeping by never living beyond our means meant a debt-free state, crucial for a sound economy.

These and many more. That might well be, but the pitfalls for us were many even though he and our editors shared broadly similar goals: We both wanted what was best for a young nation and we believed in a credible press at the same time.

For example, land acquisition unsettled many thousands of people who refused initially to resettle and had to be forcibly moved. How do we report this massive exercise without reflecting the angst as well? Or, in the case of education, we could not avoid reporting the very adverse reactions to streaming and bilingualism. But in the process, we opened ourselves up to strong suspicions

that we were undermining those initiatives.

Or spending policies. How much should people be taxed, for incomes, car ownership, employing maids, and goods and services tax? And how much financial support to give to the poor and "sandwiched class"?

Moreover, not every policy was reasonable. For instance, The Straits Times could not embrace his controversial attempt to get more graduate women to marry and have children. We felt, like most of the people, that it was too divisive to further advantage graduate women by giving them generous perks.

Mr Lee did not believe a Western-style media was in Singapore's best interest. He wanted a media like the BBC, whose objectivity he valued. He was impressed with the Japanese press. He had read about them from books by Western scholars and believed that its agenda was driven by what would best serve Japanese interests.

We went to Japan to find out more. But they are a different society in so many different ways – culturally, geographically, historically. They operated press clubs in every ministry and journalists at the clubs work at the ministry every day in a largely symbiotic relationship. It would not be workable here.

How did he translate into practice his vision of the kind of journalism he wanted? I can only answer for the time



I was at The Straits Times, from 1965 to 2006.

Put simply, in the early years, he used the hard line, with what he called knuckledusters to press his point of view, whenever he was dissatisfied with the way we covered the challenges Singapore faced.

He believed that Singaporeans had deeply embedded Asian values they should not dilute without serious consequences. Hence, he went all out to protect the strength of the family unit.

So, coverage of lifestyles that could weaken the family was a constant bone of contention. It proved tricky for the newsroom, so exposed were we to Western cultural influences and fads.

We could not ignore trends like premarital sex, but to him, it was a serious threat to the family unit. He disapproved of

promiscuous conduct and would react strongly whenever we ran a piece that appeared to promote such behaviour.

He did not press his strongly held beliefs just once, but kept it up all through his years in office. He always reminded us how the world worked. He would send us articles he had read or shared with editors his experiences over the occasional lunch or dinner.

They were mostly about developments elsewhere that had an impact on Singapore.

He was always looking over the horizon, studying what trends would affect us and what new strategies were needed to either take advantage of them or minimise their adverse effects.

His goal was to educate his people and one way was through the mass media. The purpose was simple: Unless Singaporeans

understood the realities of having to live off a small resource-poor tropical island one degree north of the Equator in an ever-changing world, they would not understand, and hopefully support, his tough policies.

Over time, one reality he had to accept was this: As Singapore developed, he had to abandon his knuckleduster ways; they were ill-suited to a more educated electorate wanting more political space.

Closing down newspapers and detaining journalists, actions that traumatised us in our newsrooms in the early 1970s, were no longer options.

In his closing years as Prime Minister, he took a more sophisticated and persuasive approach, stepping up his contact with the media – editors and younger, promising reporters

In his closing years as Prime Minister, he took a more sophisticated and persuasive approach, stepping up his contact with the media – editors and younger, promising reporters alike – to explain the issues in person, to convince and to cajole. On our part, we continued to press the need for more space and diversity of opinions in our pages, or lose credibility. We had to respond to the changing needs of the public who wanted out-of-bounds, or OB, markers for national discourse moved.

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out-of-bounds, or OB, markers for national discourse moved. It was always a fine balancing act, how to professionally serve our readers without appearing to undermine policy. Regular run-ins with the Government were thus par for the course.



MAY 14, 1955: Mr Lee and Mr David Marshall (facing Mr Lee) were both lawyers of some eminence, said Mrs Jean Marshall, and "I think they both respected each other as lawyers".

NOV 10, 2011: Mrs Marshall, with a bust of her husband (below). PHOTOS: ST FILE

Exceptional speakers of different styles

Jean Marshall, 88, is the widow of Mr David Marshall, Singapore's first elected Chief Minister from April 1955 to June 1956

BEFORE I knew either Mr Lee Kuan Yew or David Marshall, I remember being at a political meeting at the university in 1957 or 1958. I can't remember the circumstances, but both David and Mr Lee spoke on the future of Singapore.

After my years at the London School of Economics, I was not unfamiliar with political speeches. But it struck me that here were two exceptional speakers of great difference in their styles.

Mr Lee was a master of silence and the pause. He could pause and everybody would be absolutely on edge as to what he was going to say next. David had a different, sometimes more oratorical, style. He could inspire people and take them out of themselves to be something bigger than themselves.

Both of them were of course lawyers of some eminence, and I think they both respected each other as lawyers. But David had a very different personality from Mr Lee and it was at times difficult for them to appreciate each other because they really looked at life in very different ways.

David's emotional reactions were a very important component of his personality. Mr Lee appeared to have ironed out or not used emotional reactions, or possibly covered them up.

David believed that every human being has value, and that the individual has a value that can't be ironed out because every individual is worthy of respect and is important.

Of course this is difficult when it comes to working out public policy. But it did permeate his views about Singapore's post-colonial status, the need for independence, and the need for public participation in the political process.

It also permeated his



professional life and the way he fought in court – not necessarily for high fees either – but for people he thought would otherwise be denied justice.

This outlook could place him at odds with the systematic planning and thinking that Mr Lee and his team had, from the very beginning, planned, worked on and maintained for years and years.

For instance, one policy to which David took great exception was the "stop at two" policy. He was very against that and said so. He felt it was taking away a very fundamental right for people to choose to have or not to have children.

Mrs Lee was very friendly. We talked about knitting patterns, education policies, children – all kinds of things. I was very relaxed with Mrs Lee and I think she was relaxed with me. I was not relaxed with Mr Lee. He could be very, very acerbic.

We would host them for dinner when David was ambassador to France from 1978 to 1993 but I was never relaxed. I think Mr Lee was probably just as awkward with David as David was with him. They were painfully correct with each other and Mr Lee then probably still regarded David as a bit of a maverick – though he did later

express appreciation for David's work in France.

David had immense admiration for what the PAP team had achieved in Singapore.

Let nobody say that David held back in paying tribute to the achievements of Mr Lee and his government.

Mr Lee's way of doing things was different from David's, but David said, and not only to me, that he could never have achieved what the PAP had achieved through its organisation, cohesiveness and sheer abilities.

David saw the PAP as a juggernaut which did iron out legitimate opposition at various times in its history. I think it would be very difficult for David ever to forget that.

But he would be very capable of openly showing admiration for many of the ministers and PAP people who concern themselves with some of the issues that David was concerned with.

For instance, all the conversations that have been taking place about the people who feel left out, the people who are being left out. There is a real concern, for whatever reason, among the ministers and PAP of today about that group. That's a group that David certainly would have been concerned about.

THE LEE KUAN YEW I REMEMBER

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
1923 - 2015

DEC 2, 1983: Mr Fu with PM Lee, who was not easy to work for. You had to have tolerance and endurance, says Mr Fu.

James Fu, 91, was Mr Lee's press secretary from 1972 to 1993

He never took 'no' for an answer

I FIRST met Mr Lee around 1954 or 1955, in his office in Malacca Street. I was a reporter with Sin Pau then and I was trying to get some news. He had formed the PAP and was the legal adviser to some of the Chinese school students.

He struck me as a serious politician with strong political convictions, but

I was not sure if he was a determined politician.

I made up my mind after observing him for some time, during which I was doing political reporting with Nanyang Siang Pau.

I remember one occasion when he was campaigning during the 1963 General Election and he was pushed by opposition supporters into a drain. But he remained there and continued the argument with the opposition union leaders.

That made me think that he was quite a determined person. He was

quite prepared to fight with the very fierce communist cadres and he stood his ground. I began to believe that not only was he a serious politician, but he also had the determination and dedication to achieve his political goal.

I was detained in Operation Cold Store for a few months later that year as I was one of the founders of the Singapore National Union of Journalists and we were inclined to left-wing views.

After my release from detention, I joined Radio and Television Singapore

as a Chinese sub-editor. I was assigned to do reporting a few years later and gradually I was asked to report on Lee Kuan Yew.

I found it difficult because my English was still not up to standard and it was not easy covering his speeches. In 1972, I was asked to become Mr Lee's press secretary. I was reluctant because my English was still quite poor.

So I made a helluva effort to improve my English. For one or two years, I read English magazines and journals. I read all of Mr Lee's past

speeches. I conversed in English whenever possible and studied quite hard.

He was a very good instructor too. He corrected my English and adjusted my writing structure. That helped me to avoid repeating the same mistakes and improved my written English.

His writing is quite super and his speeches were all written by him, you know. We only supplied whatever material he needed. He could take a few days to a week - or even more - on important speeches because he needed to consult others.

As a boss, he did not accept any reasons for you not being able to achieve what he had in mind.

And he didn't have a time limit - from six o'clock in the morning to midnight, there may be something from him.

During the wedding of one of my daughters, he called and said he wanted me to discuss something with the press. I said, well, actually I'm at this function. He said, no, no, you can still do it.

Fortunately I had invited a few senior journalists from all the

newspapers, so I discussed the matter with them then and there.

That is the thing you were expected to do. You couldn't say, "I can't". He didn't believe in that.

He would think that everything could be done, you just had to think about how to do it. That was his attitude.

It was not easy to work for Mr Lee. You had to have some tolerance and endurance and you had to work very, very hard.

When I was his press secretary, I went to play golf in Jurong one May

Day. Suddenly a police car came to the course and I had to cancel my game.

At the time there were no mobile phones, so they'd contacted my house and were told: "James went to play golf." So they went to the golf course to get me. After that, I said, no more golf.

Generally, his assignments were quite difficult.

For example, the merger of the two Chinese newspapers in 1983. That was his idea as he thought their circulation was going down and they

might not survive.

That was a very difficult task for me as a former Chinese newspaper journalist, having to face the old directors of the Chinese newspapers. But that was his idea and I had to take time to implement it. I had to talk to the directors repeatedly and get their agreement. That was very difficult.

But Mr Lee has been quite kind to me and helped me a lot. Even after I retired, when I had a kidney operation, he wrote to me to express his concern.

Preoccupied with our survival

S R Nathan, 90, was Singapore's sixth president from 1999 to 2011. He was a social worker, trade union research official and diplomat before that

AFTER I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1965, one of my roles as a junior civil servant was to take notes at meetings.

It was a great privilege to observe at close quarters the way in which Mr Lee Kuan Yew, together with other pioneer leaders including Dr Goh Keng Swee and Mr S. Rajaratnam, set about the task of establishing the newly independent city state of Singapore on a firm footing. Mr Lee displayed extraordinary energy, resilience and an unflinching commitment, despite the odds stacked against him.

Statehood meant confronting not only the ongoing communist threat, but also other problems such as language issues, racial tensions and riots. Even after Separation, the relationship with Malaysia continued to be tense and required careful handling, as did relations with Indonesia.

Singapore's economy was in a fragile state, and jobs were in short supply. Much of the population had to be rehoused in decent conditions. These were huge challenges at the time. The Prime Minister's mind never stopped working as he mulled over the issues, big and small, that confronted Singapore. If he travelled anywhere, he was always asking if something he saw could be applied in Singapore.

He would grill anyone he met for ideas that could be useful - many a time I saw foreign dignitaries and other experts emerge from a meeting with him in a state of exhaustion, after he had pumped them for ideas and information. He was totally preoccupied with our survival and prosperity.

He could be extraordinarily tough in negotiations when our national interests were at stake. He was a pragmatist at such times, a practitioner of realpolitik, even if that meant ignoring high-minded critics, both at home and overseas. His single-mindedness fired my enthusiasm.

During these years of nation-building, working for Mr Lee Kuan Yew was pressured, stressful, exciting and challenging. That experience was an education that no university

or printed book could have given me.

As I re-read some of his speeches of the 1950s and 1960s, I was reminded that "socialism" was a recurrent theme. Was it a substantial element in his political philosophy? Was it a tactical sop to left-wing challengers? It is a theme one rarely hears in speeches today, but I hope that concern for the common good remains, as we work to produce "socialist benefits through capitalist methods".

My first working contacts with Mr Lee Kuan Yew more than 50 years ago marked the beginning of a long and eventful journey. My formal credentials are modest. Yet, on many occasions he has been willing to trust me with important tasks in a number of fields, including the diplomatic service.

When I was well into my 70s, when I thought my career in public life was probably over, he asked me to put my name forward as a candidate for the presidency of this great land.

I was honoured to be given that opportunity.

I hope that my performance in the great variety of positions I have held over the years has measured up to the confidence Mr Lee Kuan Yew placed in me.

During my career in the public service, I never had any reason to change my high opinion of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the man who, more than any other individual, created modern Singapore.

As a boss, he was exacting and yet capable of great warmth. My first assignment with him was in 1966 when I was assigned to take notes at his meeting with the Thai foreign minister at Sri Temasek.

I hurriedly put on a tie and coat, and went to the meeting room. When he saw me, he came close to me, adjusted my tie, and told me: "You must remember you are no longer in the labour movement."

That touched me immensely. I had no father, no elder brother. No one had ever done that for me, with such affection.

I am privileged to have worked with him.

A MOMENT I CHERISH: S R NATHAN

"I vividly recall the first time I came close to him around 1967. I was assigned to take notes for him. I approached him in awe, but he surprised me, beyond expectations. He approached me, with almost brotherly attention, and correcting my necktie, said, 'Nathan, you must remember you are no longer in the labour movement'. It is a moment I cherish ...

His greatest contribution to us, was the strength he gave us, at a time when forces of destruction were seeking to destroy us and turn Singapore into a communist state. He helped us to stand up and fight back those disruptive forces, despite the overwhelming strength with which they sought to destroy our society."

We will miss this giant of a man. May his soul rest in peace."

— Former president S R Nathan in a March 23 statement following the death of Mr Lee Kuan Yew



MAY 19, 1976: PM Lee Kuan Yew with (from left) Mr Ngiam Tong Dow, Mr SR Nathan, Mr Ahmad Mattar, Mr Lee's daughter Lee Wei Ling, Mrs Lee and Mr Hon Sui Sen

He was a master teacher

Lim Siong Guan, 68, group president of GIC, was Mr Lee Kuan Yew's principal private secretary (1978-1981) and head of the Singapore Civil Service (1999 to 2005)

"MY MOST direct contact with Mr Lee Kuan Yew was as his first-ever principal private secretary."

He was a master teacher to me. He had me sit in on all his meetings other than the political ones, just to listen and learn from the exposure, even though the conversations often had nothing to do with any particular topic he wanted me to work on.

From Mr Lee, I learnt the principles of governance which undergirded the transformation of Singapore, from the early days of self-government in 1959 and subsequent independence in 1965 to a modern metropolis.

I learnt that building a nation is not the same as building a city. A city may be plans and concrete structures, but a nation is people with hopes and aspirations who somehow have to be persuaded to function together for a worthy future for all.

And I learnt from Mr Lee that a leader not only needs to have clarity of views and single-mindedness of purpose, but also a tremendous capacity for communication, where complex problems are brought down to what the man-in-the-street can identify with.

From him and Dr Goh Keng

Fong Loo Fern, 61, is managing director of family-run tailoring business CYC The Custom Shop, where Lee Kuan Yew had his shirts made.



NOV 7, 2001: Mrs Fong with three of Mr Lee's shirts made by CYC The Custom Shop. She remembers Mr Lee as a warm and approachable man. ST FILE PHOTO

A man of simple tastes, says tailor

"MR LEE ordered shirts from us, and we also had pyjamas made for him. His name was usually embroidered on them in full.

In the past, he was served by my father who was in charge of sales at the time in the 1960s.

I remember my dad was very impressed with him, saying that Lee Kuan Yew was his hero. My father probably met him only a couple of times in the 1960s. After that, it was always Mrs Lee who took care of his needs, until she passed away. She came to the shop once or twice a year and would order shirts for him.

I first met him in 2010. It was a very ordinary meeting in his Istana office, just a spacious room rather simply furnished. The meeting lasted maybe about 20 minutes, and sales manager Roland Tan took his measurements. The order was for a batik shirt. The fabric was a gift from someone.

We had a short conversation with him. He asked me about my family and my business. He was warm and approachable and put us at ease.

I noticed that the shirt he was wearing was kind of old already. He kept his shirts for a long time. He had very simple tastes. His favourite colour was pink and patterns were very unlikely. He usually ordered work shirts, and didn't really choose the expensive materials.

He wasn't very concerned about what he wore, Mrs Lee always took care of all that."

New Year card every year for shoemaker

Lee Kean Siong, 62, of Lee Hoi Wah Shoes and his sister Christine Lee, 64, had been Mr Lee Kuan Yew's personal shoemakers since 1991, when their father Lee Hoi Wah died at age 74. It was Mrs Lee who first patronised the shop in 1987.

"HE WAS our customer for more than 20 years, since 1990. We made shoes for Mrs Lee too, so when her husband needed shoes, she recommended us to him. It was our father who first made shoes for Mr Lee. The first mould he made of Mr Lee's feet is still in the store. After our father died in 1991, my sister and I continued to make shoes for him.

Mr Lee would make a pair once every two years. They were always a simple pair of formal shoes made of soft black leather. It was very important that they were comfortable.

Whenever he needed to have his shoes made or adjusted, he would contact me. I usually went to his house in Oxley Road. Sometimes, he would send a car to pick me up from my shop in Jalan Kukoh.

I visited my shop twice in 2011 when he was less busy. I apologised that my shop was very dirty. He said it was not a problem, he just wanted to come and see. We took a photo together on his second visit.

We're both Hakka and



DEC 27, 1996: Then Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew at a press conference after touring shops in Bedok Reservoir with (from left) Aljunied GRC PAP candidates George Yeo, Sidek Saniff and David Lim. Mr Sidek recalls that discussions with Mr Lee were no-holds-barred and he was free to raise sensitive matters. PHOTO: BT FILE

An open man who embodied the word 'statesman'

Sidek Saniff was a PAP MP from 1976 to 2001, and a Minister of State and Senior Minister of State from 1991 to 2001.

"THERE is another side to Lee Kuan Yew. I had the opportunity of having lunch with him several times, sometimes one on one. You had to be on your toes constantly.

We would not only discuss my portfolio at the time, whether it was the Ministry of Social Affairs, Communication, Trade and Industry. We would also talk about important things, sensitive matters about the Malays, the Chinese, the Indians.

He was an open man and the embodiment of the word "statesman". I appreciated it very much because the discussions were

no-holds-barred and you were free to raise sensitive matters like the Singapore Armed Forces, mosques and the azan (the Islamic call to prayer five times a day). I was told that we had to lower the volume of the azan. Mr Lee suggested broadcasting it over the radio. Up to now, you can hear the azan on the radio five times a day.

Another discussion I learned from was about the donations to the Mosque Building Fund. At the time the donation was 50 cents. Then, Mr Lee agreed to increase the donation to \$1. But after we got \$1, we thought, let's make it \$2, \$3. But Mr Lee said: "Sidek, when you collect money from your citizens, make it the barest minimum. Those who want to give more, can give."

I gave Mr Lee a copy of my book, Paradigma Melayu Singapura, The Paradigm of Singapore Malays, which outlined his thoughts on the development of our Malay community over the years, in 2011.

He wrote back to say thank you and signed it himself. He found time to say thank you.

That was a classic example of what leadership and statesmanship is about. So when people say he was very *garang* and fierce, yeah, he was. But you must know that against the background of communism, he had to deal with it and do what was necessary. But he had a soft side.

He inducted new blood, like-minded Singaporeans that put the well-being of Singapore and Singaporeans at heart, especially the second generation leadership headed by Mr Goh Chok Tong.

I remember one occasion when my family and I were on vacation in Malaysia. I got a note: "Sidek, please do not extend your vacation, PM would like to see you." So a few days later, I met Mr Lee and he told me: "I want you to follow Hon Sui Sen to China." We then sat down for a chat. He told me three things I can never forget.

Number one: "Can you *tahan* (tolerate)? The weather will be minus 18 deg C." I just told myself that if Hon Sui Sen who was above 60 at the time could do it, so could I - I was only 40 then. So I nodded.

Second question: "You have an overcoat?" I think he knew that people may not use overcoats frequently. I said: "I'll buy one."

He said: "No need, Don't waste money." He paused for a while and said: "Ahmad Mattar has a good overcoat. Borrow from him."

Third question: "Do you have the boots to cover your shoes?" This time, I tried to convince him that I could buy the boots myself because they would cost me at most \$100.

But he said: "Oh, don't waste money, don't waste money." He was very thrifty. That was how he handled our money, our kitty. That thrift must start from you. That was his clear message. So in the end, I went to China with borrowed overcoat and borrowed shoes."



MAY 22, 1996: Miss Christine Lee with the moulds for Mr Lee's shoes (left) and those for Mrs Lee. Mr Lee would make a pair once every two years, says his shoemaker Lee Kean Siong. PHOTO: TNP FILE

addressed each other as Mr Lee in Mandarin. When we talked, it was about shoes and what he needed. As long as you made good shoes for him, he'd be happy and smile. Then I'd be happy too. His bodyguard told me he praised my shoes to his foreign visitors.

The shoes usually cost \$300 to make. Adjustment cost may be \$30, depending on what needed to be done. We gave him a 5 per cent discount.

I made the shoes using moulds of his feet I already had. They changed only slightly. He always needed metatarsal pads put in. As he aged, his foot bone slowly protruded over the years.

He sent us quite a few things over the years. Every year since

the 1990s, we received signed New Year cards with photographs of his family. Sometimes, he sent us fruit hampers.

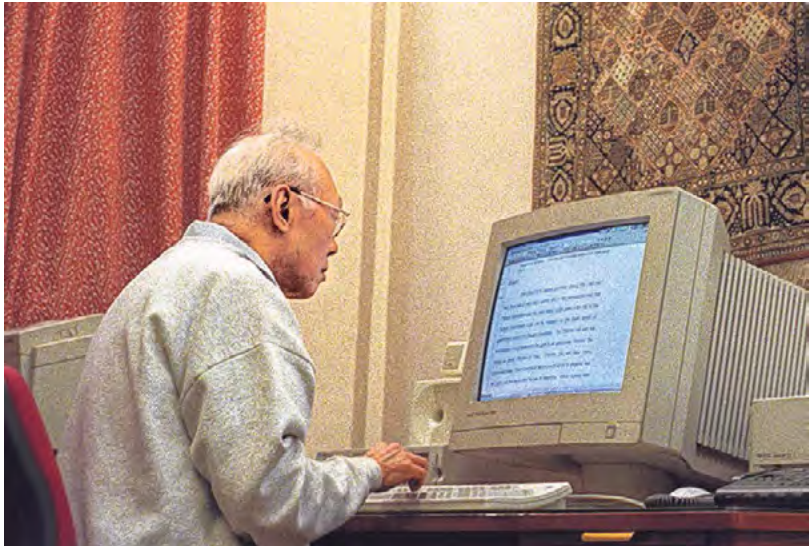
The older he got, the less he wrote. He used to write my name on the cards but not in the more recent years. His signature also got shorter and it looked like his handwriting was getting weaker. In 2004, he sent us a copy of his Mandarin book, Lee Kuan Yew: A Pictorial Biography.

Once, he sent us a beautiful crystal ornament that looked like his handwriting was getting weaker. It, he wrote a note that said: "With my appreciation and friendship. May your business and your shop Lee Hoi Wah prosper and flourish."

THE THREE LEE KUAN YEWS THAT I KNOW



Tough
prime minister



Perfectionist
writer



Elder
statesman

Chan Heng Chee, ambassador-at-large and chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities at the Singapore University of Technology and Design, was ambassador to the United States from 1996 to 2012 and is a former political science lecturer

OVER the years, I came to know three Lee Kuan Yews: the tough prime minister, the perfectionist writer, and the elder statesman.

The first time I met Mr Lee was in May 1969. I was a young assistant lecturer newly returned from Cornell. The Prime Minister had come to speak to the staff of the University of Singapore.

A week earlier he had been deeply disturbed by the reactions of students who did not seem to understand the gravity and implications of the May 13 racial riots in Malaysia, judging by their questions and mood at his public lecture.

The PM was seized by the potential contagious impact on Singapore, then a fledgling nation. How could he make them understand the stakes and our vulnerabilities?

I stood up to say something in defence of the students. Mr Lee dismissed what I said. I came back with another response. Someone who was present mumbled: “She is very young.”

Mr Lee was seen as a stern, no-nonsense, authoritarian figure. He was respected and feared. He brooked no opposition. He felt the weight of the immense tasks ahead of him. He probably disagreed with and did not like most, if not all, of my writings as a political scientist for the next two decades.

I saw him again after I returned from my posting as the Permanent Representative to the UN. I was invited to the Istana with Tommy Koh and Kishore Mahbubani to lunch with him.

It was 1993. We ate simply in a small room. There I met a different Lee Kuan Yew. He was putting forth his views on the world. The Cold War was over, the Soviet Union had collapsed, the US and Europe were triumphalist. He was thinking through his assessment of the new power configuration and what this meant for Singapore.

In hindsight, he was positioning Singapore in the new world order to ensure maximum prospects for its survival. We were his sounding board. He wanted us to challenge his conclusions.

I realised then that he was open to argument, but you had to have strong arguments. He was rigorous and robust in arguing back, like an advocate in court. After several lunches, I learnt gradually that his brusque and strong response was his debating style. If the argument was good, he would accept it.

This was demonstrated again in 1995 when he started writing his memoirs. He sent each draft chapter around to a few people to critique. I was one of them.

He would ask what we thought of what he had written, and how he



OCT 27, 2009: MM Lee with Prof Chan at the US-Asean Business Council's 25th anniversary gala dinner at Mandarin Oriental hotel, where he was presented with a lifetime achievement award by the council. ST FILE PHOTOS

could improve it. Was it tedious? Factual errors, statistics, misremembered dates, he took in at once. He accepted comments telling

him it was tedious and he would lose the reader's interest. There were occasions when one or a couple of us would disagree

with his reading of an event or conclusion in his analysis of domestic or international developments. Again if the

arguments were good he deleted or amended the paragraphs.

But it did not end there. He would revise his chapter and send it back to us to ask again: Is this better? Could he improve it further? Only when we had no further comments did he leave the draft.

I was posted to Washington by mid-1996. I received his faxed chapters in the morning. My comments were sent to him by noon. My astonished secretary would come to my office at 2.30pm to say he had sent back the revised version. It was 2.30am in Singapore.

This rhythm of exchange was repeated again and again. He was a perfectionist.

As ambassador in Washington, I accompanied him and Mrs Lee when he visited the US as Senior Minister and later Minister Mentor.

Whatever his title, Americans at the highest levels – presidents, secretaries of state, defence or treasury, elected representatives – made time for him. They wanted to hear his assessments of Asia and the world.

Ex-presidents and prime ministers of other countries do not normally get a White House meeting with American presidents. Mr Lee was the rare exception. The captains of industry and business, the chairmen and CEOs too were eager to get a share of his time and insights.

Mr Lee knew how to put a point across that landed the punch and left a strong impression with his American hosts. He never told anyone what they wanted to hear. He told them what he thought. In these meetings he infused American officials and industry with confidence and trust in Singapore and Singaporeans. He created our brand name, and investments flowed into our country.

Mr Lee was strong and energetic when he came to the US in the mid-1990s. His visit was the best thing for an ambassador, for his name opened doors. I noticed then that sometimes when asked a question, he would admit frankly that he did not know the answer. He was a mellower and more philosophical Lee Kuan Yew.

I came to know how close and devoted he was to Mrs Lee. He was touchingly solicitous of her and more so as she became frail after her first stroke. But her presence calmed him. Later, after her death, he himself turned frail.

In 2010 when he went to Washington to receive the Lincoln Medal, his last trip to the US as it turned out, he was widely acclaimed as “one of the great statesmen of Asia”.

Everyone spoke of how he built a remarkable success of Singapore out of so little. The admiration and respect for him and for Singapore were genuine and universal. They saw him as the last of the era of great post-war leaders.

It is hard to sum up Lee Kuan Yew. He was truly a patriot. He worked indefatigably for Singapore. He had the interest of his country at heart.

My wish is that younger Singaporeans should read about him, know him and understand his role in the making of our nation.