**CHARISSA YONG** 

REPORTS ON THE FAMILY SEND-OFF IN SRI TEMASEK

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**ISTANA** 





JOINS THE QUEUE TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE



ST PHOTOGRAPHERS

CAPTURE THE SCENES FROM PARLIAMENT HOUSE, WHERE THE BODY LIES IN STATE



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# THE STRAITS TIMES

CELEBRATING 170 YEARS, SINCE 1845

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2015

# Huge crowds to bid Mr Lee farewell

Nearly 40,000 had paid respects by last night and more continued through the night

**By ZAKIR HUSSAIN** DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR

THOUSANDS braved the sun and waited patiently in line for over eight hours in queues that snaked 3km along various streets around Parliament in order to file past the nation's founding Prime Minister as he lies in state.

It was a scene never before seen in Singapore, and the overwhelming response prompted government officials to extend visiting times not once, but twice, just hours after the casket bearing Mr Lee Kuan Yew's body arrived at Parliament House.

Instead of getting to pay their respects for 10 hours a day, till Saturday evening, visitors will now be allowed to do so round the clock till Saturday evening.

Also, starting 7am today, the queue to enter Parliament will start at the Padang.

Mr Lee, who was Prime Minister from 1959 to 1990, died on Monday, aged 91. By the time the first ordinary visitors were allowed into Parlia-

ment shortly after 10am, several thousand people had formed queues behind them, across and along the Singapore River and outside the Supreme Court. They waited for hours in the

sweltering sun, and as their numbers grew, the state funeral organising committee extended visiting hours till midnight.

Inside Parliament House, ushers asked visitors to file past the casket rather than form up groups before bowing, to try to speed up the flow.

Members of the public were also advised not to join the queue then. But the notice made little difference as the lines kept growing, and soon after, visiting times were again extended, this time to round the clock, until 8pm on Sat-

One line extended for some 3km along the banks of the Singapore River and nearby streets by mid-afternoon, with an estimated waiting time of eight hours.

Few left the queue, and operators of coffee shops and cafes along the line pitched in voluntarily to distribute bottled water to those in line.

Last night, the queues to enter



Starting 7am today, the queue to enter Parliament will start at the Padang

■ SEE PAGE A7

Parliament remained long, but the waiting time had gone down to three hours at midnight.

Over 37,000 visitors had paid their last respects by 10pm.

Public transport operators SMRT and SBS Transit extended train services and 41 feeder bus services past normal hours to operate round the clock last night, with many more expected to pay their respects overnight.

The Land Transport Authority will also work with them to moni-





ABOVE: The queue to get into Parliament House was 3km long at one point, snaking to Fullerton Hotel, past UOB Plaza. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

LEFT: People straining to snap pictures of the gun carriage carrying Mr Lee's casket. ST PHOTO: JOYCE FANG

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PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE: Members of the public forming a long and winding line to pay their last respects to Mr Lee after his body was transferred to Parliament House. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

# 'Hours of queueing nothing compared with what Mr Lee did'

FROM PAGE A1

tor demand and see whether to ex- Third World to First". tend operating hours for the next two nights.

Once inside Parliament House, many visitors teared up readily as the morning. Mr Edward Ho, 39, they paid their last respects to a area manager of a healthcare comman they had hardly or never pany, in fact came by at 11pm met, but who they said they were with his cousin, but officials were forever grateful to for the stand- still setting up barricades, so they ard of living and opportunities they enjoy today.

Among those who arrived early was business owner Lorraine Low dia for a business trip, and wanted Diaz, 37, who came with her moth- to pay his last respects, he said. er and six-year-old son at 8.30am and waited four hours to pay her al thousand workers, students and respects to Mr Lee.

gual education I got here only Bridge Road to catch a glimpse of when I travelled overseas," she said. "Four hours of waiting in the Lee's casket from the Istana to queue is nothing in exchange for Parliament House. Mr Lee's years of toil on our behalf. I'd camp here for a week if al gun carriage carried the casket that's what it took to pay my last in a brief foot procession from Sri respects to him."

rector of training company Pow- Hsien Loong and his wife Ho erEdge, came with six of his staff Ching, and family members. members with a banner that read:

Many also began queueing up after lunch, among them former past the streets to Parliament, healthcare support officer Nalaayini Thambiah, 65, who was asked Yew" and "thank you" as it ento join a shorter queue for the eld- tered the Parliament driveway. erly. She said of Mr Lee: "He made sure everyone had a home minority, I never felt disadvan- PM Lee and family members, retaged. I watch the news about con- ceived the casket. flicts overseas and I am relieved I

was born here." Bosses gave employees the day off or organised trips to pay tribute, shop owners closed their shuteven drove down from Kuala gional grouping in 1967. Lumpur to file past a man many

said they did not know personally, but who they admired and respected for leading Singapore "from

The first to pay their respects had begun waiting outside Parliament House in the wee hours of walked around and returned at 3am to start queueing. He had a 1pm flight to Cambo-

By the time the sun rose, severothers had also lined Orchard "I really appreciated the bilin- Road, Bras Basah Road and North the funeral procession bearing Mr

Temasek, the official residence of Mr Mohammed Fareed, 38, di- the prime minister, led by PM Lee

The gun carriage then travelled where many shouted "Lee Kuan

Commissioner of Police, and

who said Mr Lee's vision made paid their respects. Singapore a modern, vibrant coun-Sultan Ibrahim of Johor and Sul-

Shortly after 9am, a ceremoni-

The procession then drove past "Without your leadership and poli- the Istana building where Presicies, SMEs like us would not have dent Tony Tan Keng Yam and existed and we are reminded that Emeritus Senior Minister Goh the harmony and prosperity that Chok Tong paid their respects and we have, had been engineered by a bagpiper from the Singapore your passion to build a better Sin- Gurkha Contingent played Auld Lang Syne.

There, the Chief of Defence, and that we were multiracial. As a Speaker of Parliament, as well as

> Key dignitaries who paid their respects yesterday included Asean

In the afternoon, PM Lee also

ters for the day so they could vis- try and saw him play an impor- visited several of those waiting in Development Chan Chun Sing al- proud to see how Singaporeans it, and a number of Malaysians tant role in the formation of the re- line, to thank people for coming so visited well-wishers, and said come together to care for each oth- spects during the sitting, which is and waiting patiently. in a Facebook post he was er," he said. "The mood was sorrowful but touched to see the entire nation

its!" PM Lee said on Facebook. Minister for Social and Family

Today, Parliament will hold a

secretary-general Le Luong Minh, tan Muhammad of Kelantan also not downcast. We are in good spir- united in this moment, and com- special sitting at 4pm where MPs ing together to help others in line. will pay tribute to Mr Lee's contri-"Mr Lee would have been butions to Singapore.

Visitors can continue to pay re-

TEARS FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN: A woman is overcome with emotion open only to invited guests. (right) after the gun carriage carrying Mr Lee's casket passes in front of Plaza Singapura en route to Parliament House. ST PHOTO: JOYCE FANG

arrives at Parliament House. ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM



#### COUSINS WHO WERE FIRST IN LINE

"We were here at 11pm (on Tuesday), but they told us they were still setting up, so we walked around and came back at 3am. I was afraid the queue would be too long if I came later. I have a flight to catch at 1pm, so I wanted to make sure I get to pay my last respects before I leave. Mr Lee has done a lot for us."

#### - Mr Edward Ho (below left), 39, Asia-Pacific area manager of a healthcare company

"Mr Lee did what he had to do during difficult times to make Singapore what it is today. He gave us stability and security that give us the peace of mind to bring up our children here. Because of him and the system he has put in place, there is certainty that Singapore is resilient enough to continue without him."

- His cousin, Mr Alvin Loh (below right), 40, regional sales manager of an IT firm



#### BILINGUALISM A GOOD CALL

"I want to see him one last time – he's my idol. I was from a Chinese school and used to feel very disadvantaged after he introduced the bilingual policy. But now, as a businessman, knowing English has helped me to expand my semiconductor business overseas, in countries like the United States. Bilingualism has changed my life." - Mr Guay Boon Bing (below), 49,



#### **CLOSING FOR STAFF** TO PAY RESPECTS

"We are closed from now until Saturday, so that everyone can go and pay tribute to Mr Lee. I'm giving my staff time to look through what Mr Lee had done, and reflect on where Singapore is moving on to without him. I have attended all the wakes of the other Singapore founding leaders. They have provided a very strong platform for us to build

Mr Dennis Ng (below, far right),52, owner of a tuition chain, who was there with 19



#### **COUNT OUR BLESSINGS**

"Our Pledge says it, that we will work towards peace and progress and prosperity. When I started out as a maths teacher, saving was next to impossible, given our salary. There was racial tension. But by the 1970s, we had a home, and we had stability." - Retiree Ooi Tiew Tim, 78, on what he appreciates most

about Mr Lee. He left his home at 8am to join the crowd gathering at the Istana



GUN CARRIAGE TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE







North Bridge Road and finally to Parliament House where shouts of "Lee Kuan Yew" rent the air. ST PHOTOS: KEVIN LIM, DESMOND WEE, WANG HUI FEN, ALPHONSUS CHERN

# They came simply to say 'Thank you, Mr Lee'

From all walks of life they came, Singaporeans sharing a common grief and message

#### By ROHIT BRIJNATH and RACHEL AU-YONG

THIS street has never known such silence. This city of perpetual motion, but for a solemn breeze brushing the leaves, is strangely still. This area in Orchard Road, outside the Istana, usually filled with the sound of hissing buses and a thousand conversations is now a mute gathering. Even the phone, that Singapore accessory, does not dare to ring. Remembrance has its own appropriate

Long before the gun carriage emerges from the Istana grounds at 9.37am, people are in anxious attendance. Businesswoman Angela Tan, 54, arrives in the darkness at 5.30am. "I didn't get to see him come to the Istana," she says. "So I must see him leave it for the last time or I will regret this all my life." Mr Fikri Omar, 63, has shrugged off tiredness after a night shift as a security guard to be here by 7.20am.

Under a blue sky speckled with clouds, mourning is in the air. Beneath a kind canopy of trees near the gate, where police officers gently marshal foot traffic, a solitary flag flutters behind a barricade. It is a small flag on a stick, the type you might wave at a sporting event or at a parade. Yet, in keeping with the moment, even this one held up by a man in the crowd deliberately flies at half-mast.

When first light comes, the crowd between the Istana and Plaza Singapura is a trickle, then a stream, then a river of a thousand people. Mr Lee Kuan Yew stood for all Singaporeans, now Singaporeans of all races and religions and types and dress come to stand for him. Three sweaty runners arrive, a doctor in scrubs appears, women in wheelchairs make their way through. A monk stops by as does part-time taxi driver Tajuddin Mohd Isa, 39, with his wife and young son in tow. A group sings a song in praise, women carry flowers and others just hold on to a contained grief.

On one side of the Istana gate, under small white tents, are tables to write condolence messages. On the ground, bouquets cover the earth, white lilies wrapped in plastic, yellow carnations in a bunch, all bringing colourful life to a sombre day. Aleusheya Singh, nine, is here to leave her own scribbled message. "I like his policy on bilingualism best because now everyone speaks two languages," she earnestly says. She is late for school but her father is a willing accomplice in this act: per- notes left here - for a man their man from its past and it is an ad- vealed through a drawing of a have just a public toilet out in the haps he appreciates this is a history lesson of its own.

A nation reserved in speech and reticent in expressing itself has made an exception these past tude than gushy sentimentality. of its present and fixated on its fuinmediately taken."

On the numerous handwritten ture is pausing to remember this whose death they take personally every medium. two words repeatedly stand out: "Thank you."

few days for an exceptional man. feel, they want to speak, as if part of which reads: "He was constructed and a self-esteem in on 70, describes her childhood sionate then. But then Mr Lee Emotion has been expressed wide- words are their only form of re- mighty in thought, courageous in built. ly, but more through quiet grati- spectful repayment. A city proud decisiveness and swift in action

remembers growing up in a kam- minister, when she helped her kueh.'

A child's unbiased opinion is repung in the 1970s. "It used to family sell kueh by the roadside. "I used to sit on a milk crate writers may have never met but miration that is conveyed through crayoned figure, below which is open. It was very scary, very we were illegal hawkers and the scrawled the words: "Mr Lee You smelly. But in no time at all, Singapolicemen would come and we Mr Robert Lai Tien Kean, 46 Are a Superhero." But most peo- pore has developed so much. I be- would run." Sometimes, she says, and shy, articulates it on a typed ple just mine their memories to lieve we can thank him for that." the kueh was kicked into the People want to write what they note which he hands to reporters, talk freely of this man, a nation Madam Toh Bok Hua, closing drain. "They weren't very compasduring the time of Mr Lim Yew Kuan Yew came along and things Madam Rathika Ravindran, 45, Hock, Singapore's second chief changed, and we got a stall to sell

priate now and unbearable. The eruption of noise is sponta-

the motorcycle engines of the out- then the applause rises. A chant of the sun of the street, citizens offer rapher simply weeps and works. Yew!" will rent the air. Here, outriders, waiting outside, start to "MM Lee, we love you!" begins, a digital salute: arms raised with Only the soldiers in the following side the Istana, buses reclaim the hum. First a police car appears, because to some he is still Minis- smartphones in hand, filming eve- trucks, young men on duty, rigid street and noise returns to the then the stately gun carriage carry- ter Mentor, and a few join in. ry second, photographing every in their seats, disguise any loss morning. Their leader has gone ing the flag-draped coffin, and From across the street comes the movement. Yet through the click- with stoicism. A once-silent and people begin to disperse. the hush cannot be held any more. yell "Majulah Singapura!", from ing symphony of cameras can be street is now just a sad one. For a brief while, grief breaks its behind comes the cry "Grandfa- heard the convulsive sounds of stichains as if silence is both inapprother of Singapore". One man says fled sobs. nothing at all: he only bows.

Then suddenly it is time and neous and diverse. A few clap and from the shade of the Istana into tear-stained spectacles. A photog- House where cries of "Lee Kuan

but, in just over a minute, the fu- have liked it. A tear trails down a woman's neral cortege has passed. It winds Mrohitb@sph.com.sg

"It is so surreal that he's gone. He's been a constant in our lives, after all. When we saw the coffin draped with the Singapore lag, reality finally kicked in We're too young to see the changes that Singapore went through in its early years, but we learnt about them in school. We didn't have to suffer through the tough times that the Pioneer Generation

right), 35, waiting at the Supreme Court just before 10am. She and colleague Kelly Tan (below, left), 38, had taken leave from work. They saw the gun carriage arrive at Parliament House.



#### **BRIEF ENCOUNTER**

person only once when I was working part-time as a waitress at the Ritz-Carlton. He was there for a function

and I served

him drinks, but I was too intimidated to speak to him as he looked really serious. When I was much younger, I watched the footage of him crying when he announced the separation from Malaysia. I asked my elders why he cried and they said it was because he was sad that we had to leave Malaysia.

I remember thinking: 'But why? We're doing fine.' It was only later that I appreciated that we're doing fine because

 Ms Wendy Cheng (above), 31, celebrity blogger known as Xiaxue. She was with about 50 bloggers and staff from Nuffnang, the blogger management agency that represents her.

#### Worth the Wait

"I really appreciated the bilingual education I got here only when I travelled overseas. When I studied in Australia, people used to be amazed that someone like me from a tiny Asian country could speak good English.

Then when I visited China, people there were surprised that I spoke Mandarin because I don't really look Chinese. I still have family in the Philippines and could have bought and settled in a much larger house with the money

that we paid for our Loyang apartment here. But I've never seen myself as a Filipina. I want my son to serve his national service here and grow up as a

Four hours of waiting in the queue is nothing in exchange for Mr Lee's years of toil on I'd be camped here for a week if that's what it took

to pay my last respects to

- Mrs Lorraine Low Diaz, 37, live entertainment business owner. She started queuing at 8.30am and waited for four hours.

#### ALL THE WAY FROM KL

"I flew in this morning from KL (Kuala Lumpur) just to pay my respects to Mr Lee and will be flying back at night. I actually bought two round-trip tickets the moment I heard of his death on Monday. I was afraid that tickets would be sold out, but I didn't know the schedule for events. So I bought one ticket for Tuesday and one on Wednesday for a total of about

RM500 (S\$186). I've always been an admirer of Mr Lee and have seen for myself how well my friends who moved here are doing. He also raised the profile of the overseas Chinese when he became a respected statesman. Singapore has raised the bar for countries in the region and I wish that Malaysia will be as

successful as Singapore." - KL businessman Au Kean Hoe (below, right), 61, with (from left) Mr Lai Huen Poh, Mr Chu Chee Leong, Mr Chris Chong and Mr Chin Kin Yong





(Above) The flag-draped coffin making its way into Parliament House where the public can pay their respects to the founding father of Singapore until Saturday night. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

(Left) As the cortege passes, the hush of the morning is broken by a rush of camera clicks and a symphony of stifled sobs. Some break into applause and a chant of "MM Lee, we love you" begins. PHOTO: MATTHIAS HO FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

As the gun carriage travels cheek and old men wipe their its dignified way to Parliament 🖂 rachelay@sph.com.sg

Many of them presumably return-Some have waited for hours ing to work. Just as Mr Lee would when Mao Zedong died.

# Long, slow queue to history

It took hours, but for some it was important to be part of this occasion

gle one of us had the same look of dismay and self-doubt on our ly: "We're almost at UOB Plaza."

days, just waiting for native control of this occasion."

By RACHEL CHANG ASSISTANT POLITICAL EDITOR

through Hong Lim Park as part of the

queue to pay tribute to Mr Lee

Kuan Yew yesterday. The

queue crossed an

overhead bridge in

Clarke Quay and

Boat Quay before reaching Parliament House,

where Mr Lee's

body is lying in state. Meanwhile

PM Lee dropped by Cavenagh Bridge late in the

afternoon and interacted with

members of the public. Some

flowers and placards with

the area.

foreigner, the glorious rich, the see him.

the later-born who know nothing country.

Kuan Yew's body lay in state at man next to me left.

LONG LINES TO PAY RESPECTS

The admirer, the critic, the near Elgin Bridge in North Bridge aged woman named Janet peeled the places. when Singapore was just an idea, streaming in from all parts of the shift at 5pm, she said.

WE QUEUED – the old, the in- Parliament House, tens of thou- Two hours in, policemen began My fellow queuers and I were a they sounded almost rote. The rest of us tried to stay and Xingda, a 20-year-old Singa-

Street left out for us.

firm, the famous, the nameless. sands of people queued for up to putting barricades in place to sepa- band of brothers. We shared um- Did he know about any of the We lined up - the native, the eight hours under a blazing sky to rate the snaking queue. One of brellas and tissue packets, and more controversial things that Mr Mr Lee, the last leaf has fallen. In them informed us that it would be urged one another to use the toil Lee did? I asked. At about 10am, I joined the line six more hours. At this, a middle- let and get lunch while we held and Mrs Ho had taken the day off, tion."

others umbrellas - and every sin- year-old retired policeman, val- there as "I'm quite free nowa- legacy, I told Xingda about some gle one of us had the same look of iantly insisted it would pass quick- days, just waiting for national ser- of Mr Lee's lieutenants, like Dr faces when we discovered how We were fortified by cold wa- I asked him what he knew of nam, who also built the nation. long the line already was. ter and orange punch that a kind- Mr Lee and he said the usual, Mr Lee always credited the im-On the first day that Mr Lee Fifteen minutes in, the gentle- hearted shop owner in Canton phrases like "he built the coun- portance of a good team, I said. try", repeated so often lately that He would not have wanted any-

"He locked up some people for,

Some were carrying flowers, strong. Mr Geoffrey Low, a 63- pore Polytechnic graduate, was are alive to the complexities of his Goh Keng Swee and Mr S. Rajaratone to think he did it alone.

a way, we are orphans now. I sensed Xingda losing interest like, 20 years, right? I know he when he said, pointing at a lavensilver-haired who remember Road, one among thousands off. She had to start her work I fell in with the Ho family. Mr was quite hard on the opposi- der-haired pint-sized woman up ahead: "Eh look, there's Xiaxue!" Satisfied that our young people The local celebrity blogger was in

They are all gone now. With

we reached UOB Plaza. The cool Transformative leaders like Mr side the Asian Civilisations Muse- for Mr Lee were rather unceremo- ple were stopping in front of a tintriver breeze and wide open vista Lee come around once in a life- um. Deng admired Mr Lee and niously taken by a young full- ed window. It was almost com-

He gave me a pep talk that, to else we will do in our lives. my surprise, had little to do with I went to use the toilet at one vulnerable and yet he was never tem to get people to pass through There was a loosening in my

him. So we should be here." Lee once called air-conditioning

were a welcome change from be- time, maybe less. A life like his is saw Singapore's success as one time national serviceman. We pletely opaque, but if you looked ing stared at by the office lunch out of the reach of us ordinary reason to embark on his epochal walked into the air-conditioned closely, you could make out the crowds over their mee goreng. folk. But we can be a passing part reform and opening up of China. Parliament House and everyone lines of Mr Lee's coffin and the But I began to lose heart of the great acts of an extraordi- Mr Lee had called him the ex- tensed up. I don't know what I ex- stars on the flag that covered it. around 2pm, about four hours in. nary journey. To be here, to bear ception to the rule that great lead-pected, but the moment happened Without the opportunity to "Why are we doing this? I'm so witness at the final moment - this ers are of tall stature. He always almost as if by accident. tired and I think I'm getting a sun- is important, somehow. Perhaps told it like it was, I thought to my- Later, I learnt that because of resorted to bowing, weeping and burn," I complained to Geoffrey. more important than anything self. Mr Lee drummed it into Sin- the unexpectedly massive crowd, saying their prayers for Mr Lee to

chance like this again," he told As the sliding doors whooshed literal size. me. "This is history. It's like open and air-conditioned air ca- Once we crossed Cavenagh walking through the hall and be- for five hours. I said to Geoffrey: ressed my face like the hands of Bridge, the line moved briskly. fore we knew it, we were passing "Well, we were there." I was aim-"There won't be another like an angel, I remembered that Mr Soon we were at the tentage. It reminded me of that Shake- the greatest invention in history. far from the longest he had ever All the while, the guards told came out a little strained. spearean quote, when Cassius It changed life in the tropics, queued for anything. He once us to "please keep moving".

calls Julius Caesar a Colossus who he said, and he once inquired after lined up overnight for Bee Gees We exited the building and ing, replying: "That's all that mat-

his huge legs and peep about," Back at the queue, we passed ty screening, all the flowers that the hours of build-up. 

gaporeans that we were small and the authorities changed the sys- that tinted window. how much Mr Lee sacrificed for of the office buildings while Geof- cowed or bullied by any larger na- more quickly. We were supposed chest. It felt like I had done some-Singapore. "You'll never get a frey held my place in the line. tion. Stature is about more than to have stood in a group and thing important and necessary, bowed. But instead, we started even if all I did was stand in line by a flag-draped coffin, and then ing for a note of sarcasm at the Geoffrey let on that this was were past it and out the hall.

linger in front of his coffin, people

to those going to pay their respects at Parliament House.

Station, florist Artisan de

ACTS OF KINDNESS

THE Song Fa Bak Kut Teh

eatery along North Bridge

Road set up standing fans and

chairs for people needing a

rest. It also spent more than

cups and a water dispenser for

The restaurant was one of

several businesses that tried to

Singaporeans queueing in the

Others included Fullerton

Hotel, the Asian Civilisations

Museum and the Clarke Quay

distributed water and other

drinks to thirsty members of

Over at Raffles Place MRT

Fleurs gave free white flowers

hot sun for hours yesterday.

\$300 on water, ice, plastic

people waiting in line.

offer some respite for

management, which

**GRATEFUL FOR CLEAN TOILETS** 

"I had to ask someone to leave my flowers and a note thanking him. Last time, very dirty -

the public.

(but thanks to Mr Lee), change and change so we now have clean toilets. Hope his

- Madam Wong Ah Mee, 74, a cleaner. She queued during her lunch break between 11.30am and

12.30pm, but could not get in

children will be able to do the

**KEEN LEARNER** 

"I was in the St John Ambulance Brigade, and Mr Lee visited the school during one of our events.



Knowing we were a Chinese-educated school, he told us to speak to him using Mandarin to improve his skills. He was never afraid to learn more where he felt he needed to, even from students."

- Madam Yvonne Yu, 71, who oined the queue at 3pm. Th former civil servant met Mr Lee during her secondary school days at Nan Chiau Girls' High School. Many years later, she ran into Mr Lee while she was exercising in the Marina Bay area. He was dressed in sports gear and accompanied by security officers. Even then, he went over to say

hello and ask how she was doing

#### A GOOD MOVE

"I came to Singapore in 1977 because I had married a Singaporean. Back then, I landed at Paya Lebar Airport and found Manila more advanced than Singapore. But Singapore has overtaken the Philippines by leaps and bounds. When I first arrived, \$1 was 3 pesos. Now, \$1 gets more than 30 pesos. I'm glad came to Singapore. My three children got a good education here and are doing well." - Mrs Lanie Low, 57, a housewife, who was born in the Philippines and became a Singaporean in 1988. She joined the queue at 8.30am with her

#### HIS POLICIES BENEFITED US

daughter and grandson, and waited for four hours

"I felt I had to pay my respects to Mr Lee anyway. By stabilising Singapore, he stabilised the

my decision."

rest of Asia as well. It was because of his sound policies that I decided to send my daughter to Singapore instead of Britain or the United States, which she could have easily qualified for. I have never once regretted

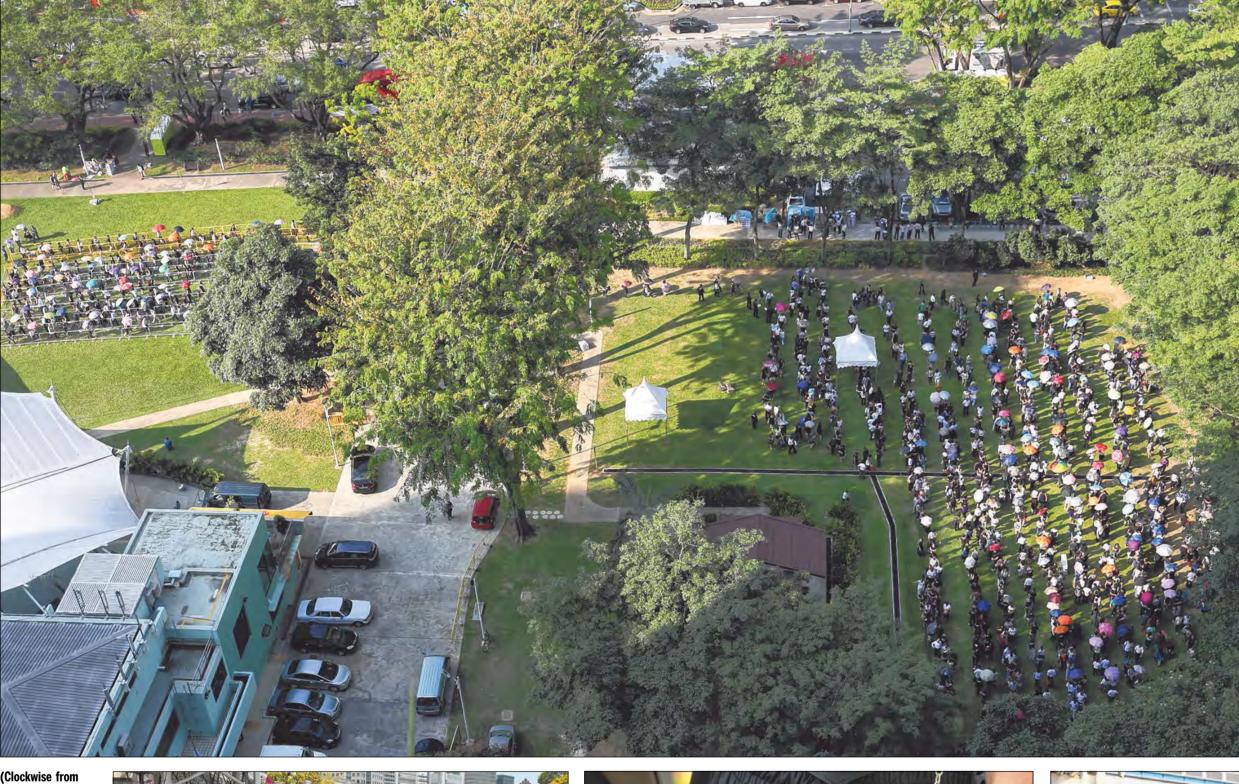
 Mr Sun Zhen Yang, 63, from Shanghai, queued for nearly five hours despite a foot injury and his doctor's advice not to stand for long periods

#### SUSTAINING THE CROWD "Standing for two to three

hours without food and water is very harsh, you will get hungry very easily. For the people queueing to pay tribute to Mr Lee, this is the least we could do."

- Mr Alex Goh, 51, director of Aldrich Office Furniture and Projects. He set up a stand In Circular Road with staff, his wife and children, offering drinks and biscuits to those in the queue















## Queue starts at Padang today

STARTING at 7am today, the The organisers of the State patient, and to follow the direc-

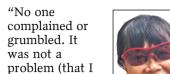
will start at the Padang. special needs.

queue for members of the public Funeral for Mr Lee, 91, an- tions of the marshals on the who want to pay their respects nounced this in a statement last ground," the statement added. to the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew night and advised those who At its peak yesterday, the want to go for the lying in state waiting time for those in the There will also be a special at Parliament House to use pubqueue was at least eight hours. lane at the Padang for the elder- lic transport."In view of the The statement said that waly, pregnant women, schoolchil- large crowd, a long waiting time ter will be distributed to those dren, families with children un- can be expected. We seek the un- waiting in line and updates on

der six years old and those with derstanding of members of the the queue waiting time will also public to remain orderly and be continue to be provided hourly.







Lee's face). I can understand because of the crowd. You cannot take your time. We need to give others

couldn't see Mr

a chance. I came alone. I love Mr Lee dearly and I believe in him. Children being able to wander around after school - it was all his doing, making Singapore into a safe place. They are able to wander around after school. In the United States, parents have to drive their children here and

- Ms Clara Miles, 60, a former hotel guest relations officer, started queueing just before 2pm and made it inside Parliament House at 3.55pm

#### HE'S DONE SO MUCH FOR US

"I waited for an hour and a half. I was fortunate enough to ask a guy in the

queue who guided me to the senior citizens' line - I had almost wanted to give up when I heard I had to start queueing

at Hong Lim. (Mr Lee) was such a wise person and he was a very strong leader and he has really done so much for us. When I left school in 1964, jobs were scarce but finally I joined the

civil service. It was Mr Lee and his team who brought in a lot of establishments to Singapore, multinational companies, for example. After I spent three years in the civil service, I was fortunate enough to join a multinational company which produces semiconductors. I was there for 34 years. At this company, I was sent to Penang to set up a branch and it was there that I met my

#### **NEVER FELT DISADVANTAGED**

"I was lucky today because someone saw me limping (I have stiff knee joints) and told a security guard, who let me go to the

Pioneers queue. But if not for my health problem, I would wait two days if I needed to. I already made it all the way here, taking a bus from my home in Redhill, so why not wait? It is my last chance to

say farewell, after all. Mr Lee made sure everyone had a home and that we must be multiracial. I live in a rental apartment with my mother now, but used to live in a kampung and people had to share a common toilet. Now look at all our flats. And we

can drink our tap water. As a minority, I also never felt disadvantaged... I watch the news about the conflicts overseas and I am relieved I was born here."

- Former healthcare support officer Nalaayini Thambiah, 65, who queued from 1.30pm to 4.30pm

#### **CONCERN FOR OUR WELFARE**

"Most of us are where we are because of him. Even if we queue for eight or 12 hours, it's nothing compared to him spending his whole life to serve us. (When I met him), he showed a lot of concern about the welfare of workers. He would ask about our staff welfare benefits and whether we had sufficient rest."

 Mr Richard Tan, 50, general secretary of the United Workers of Electronics & Electrical Industries, who joined the queue at 2pm with colleagues. He met Mr Lee at an NTUC event 10 years

#### **EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE**

"We brought food, water and good company to wait out the queue. It's an expression of gratitude to Mr Lee for his contributions to the nation." Dr Wong Meng Ee, 45, assistant professor for special education at the National Institute of Education, who is now almost totally visually-impaired. He queued with six NIE colleagues who were helping him

THE STRAITS TIMES THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2015 LYING IN STATE



The contingent from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) at Parliament House yesterday included (from left) Commissioner of Prisons Soh Wai Wah, Singapore Civil Defence Force Commissioner Eric Yap, Commissioner of Police Hoong Wee Teck, MHA Deputy Secretary Goh Soon Poh and MHA Permanent Secretary Leo Yip. ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM



Sultan Ibrahim of Johor (in black), accompanied by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, paying his last respects to Mr Lee at Parliament House yesterday. ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM

# Silent farewell, broken by sobs

Members of the public queue for hours to pay their last respects

to say their goodbyes.

#### By THAM YUEN-C

PEOPLE queued for as long as five lunchtime meant that organisers who died on Monday at age 91. hours yesterday morning to pay had to keep a tighter rein on time. Ordinary Singaporeans, contin-Yew at Parliament House. But inside the hall where his Parliament to pay their respects. organisations and uniformed

gates will close at 8pm. daybreak, entered the hall in down their cheeks. in the hours people could go to sentatives of ministries, self-help the casket.

though they could not see Mr on occasion to receive some of the groups to pay homage to The older folk were particular-

ing in the queue. An unexpected surge close to Singapore's first Prime Minister, ly overwhelmed, as quiet sobbing those in the line who entered the Erina, 31, who started queueing Some dignitaries had more asked to pick up the pace when 10.30am and waited four hours. their last respects to Mr Lee Kuan This later prompted a change gents of schoolchildren and repretime and could walk right up to they filed past the casket. Prime Minister Lee Hsien stretched around Clarke Quay and to Parliament House.

or night, until Saturday, when the 4m from the casket and bow. Al- emerged from an adjacent room Raffles Place and Fort Canning. Among those in the queue were Yesterday's early birds, some Lee's body, many were overcome guests and later even went out- Malaysian Au Kean Hoe, 61, who of whom started queueing before with emotion and tears rolled side to greet those who were wait- flew in yesterday morning from Kuala Lumpur specially to pay his As the crowd built up outside, respects, and legal executive Vivi hall from around 1.30pm were from UOB Building at about The firm she works at, Clifford By this time, the queues Law, gave its staff time off to go The public waiting i

House yesterday. A

surge in the crowd numbers prompted a

change in the hours

that people can go to Parliament to pay

They can now do so

any time, day or night, until Saturday, when

the gates will close at

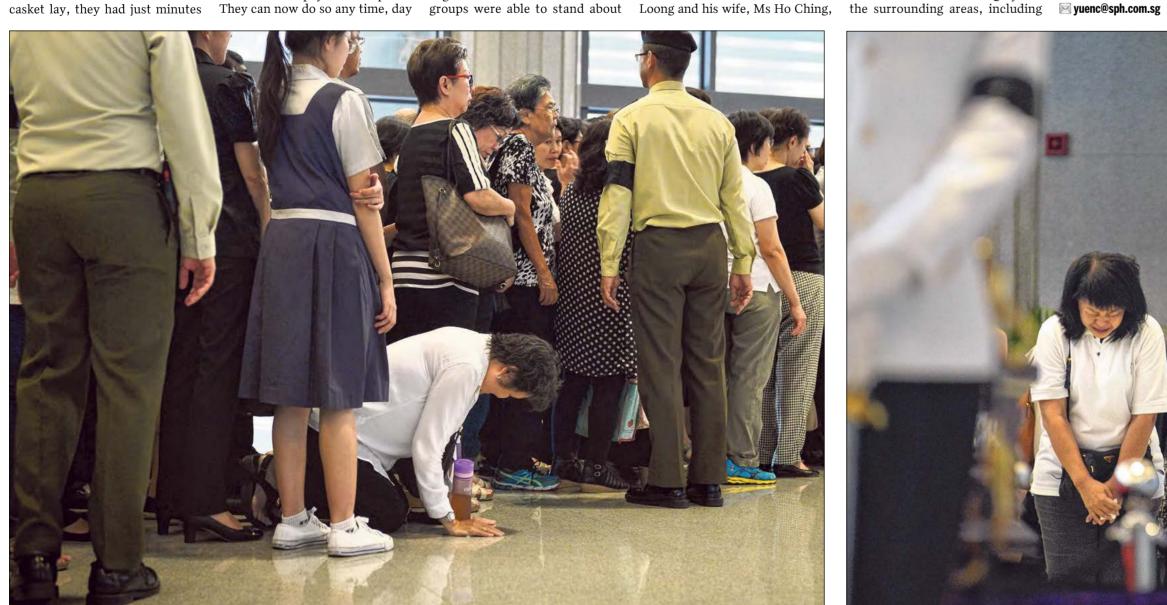
**8pm.** ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

their last respects.





A woman in tears at Parliament House yesterday. Though the mourners could not see Mr Lee's body, many were overcome with emotion. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM



Ordinary Singaporeans, students and representatives of self-help organisations and uniformed groups were among those who paid homage to Mr Lee. Older people were particularly overwhelmed, filling the hall with sobs. ST PHOTOS: ALPHONSUS CHERN



**A11** 





A woman being comforted as she is overcome with emotion. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

Members of the public (right) streaming out of Parliament House at 9.45pm, after paying their respects to the late Mr Lee. By 10pm yesterday, the waiting time was estimated to be four hours, down from about eight hours at its peak. ST PHOTO: LIM SIN THAI

> "(I) was moved by the huge crowds who came. Thank you for queuing so many hours in the hot sun to say goodbye to Mr Lee."

> > PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG,
> >  in a Facebook post that drew 40,000 likes in three hours

# Steady stream of mourners long into the night

More expected to visit Parliament House overnight

#### By WALTER SIM

THE LONG queues that snaked along the Singapore River yesterday afternoon continued through Choy, 91, said: "Mr Lee was a very special person. the lines waiting to pay their last respects to Mr and he was very frank." Lee Kuan Yew.

hours at its peak. Lines had also formed along the the National Day song, Home, which PM Lee Supreme Court, The Adelphi shopping mall and stretched all the way to the Padang. With bus and "My parents str ment overnight.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong thanked those who came, in a Facebook post that drew 40,000 when they were students, and went back over the likes in three hours: "(I) was moved by the huge years to visit," he said. crowds who came. Thank you for queuing so many hours in the hot sun to say goodbye to Mr Lee."

Punggol from 1963 to 1991, said: "My mind was go-will forever remember him." ing through all the years that I had shared with waltsim@sph.com.sg

him, sometimes in his office in the Istana or in City Hall in the earlier days.' Former politician and diplomat Lee Khoon the evening, with the after-work crowd adding to He had courage, he was resolute in his actions,

Foreign visitors also paid tribute to Mr Lee. The At 10pm yesterday, the waiting time was esti- choir of St John's College in Cambridge Universimated to be four hours, down from about eight ty, in town for a show, performed a rendition of

"My parents studied in Cambridge. They were train services extended throughout the night, not in St John's, but they had friends there, and more people were expected to stream into Parlia- one of their favourite places was the Bridge of Sighs, which is in St John's College. "They took a picture together at the bridge

About 70 foreign dignitaries attended the first day of the public wake yesterday. They included Among those who came to say their final fare- the Sultan of Johor and the Sultan of Kelantan, as wells were members of the ruling party's Old well as Asean Secretary-General Le Luong Minh.

Guard, who formed a group that kept vigil for half

Said Mr Minh: "He has left us a lasting legacy an hour. Mr Ng Kah Ting, 75, who was MP for and for that, the people of the Asean community





The lines of people around The Adelphi shopping mall in North Bridge Road at 8.30pm. ST PHOTO: LIM SIN THAI



A woman weeps as she clutches a tablet computer displaying a portrait of Mr Lee, after paying her respects to him at Parliament House. ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM

#### **'I'M NOT AFRAID OF THE SUN'**

"I saw him when I was a child. I was about seven at that time. It was during one of the election rallies and he



came by my house. I was living in an old walk-up apartment in Jalan Besar. Over the years, we now have Housing Board flats to live in and it's thanks to him.

I decided to come down to pay my respects to Mr Lee today as the weather is good and sunny. I'm not afraid of hot weather, because I'm used to standing and working under the sun. If it rains, that'll be worse and I won't be able to

 Mr Leong Ying Wai, 58, who works as a gardener in a condominium and had been standing in line for four hours by

#### **'I'LL WAIT, I'M NOT HUNGRY'**

"I'm not tired. No problem. You tell me eight hours also l stand, because I want to see him. I'm not going to see him any more after this. My daughter asked me if I'm hungry. I said I'm not hungry, I need to see him first."

- Madam Ambarasi B. Rajagoopal 49, a service assistant, was in the queue with her daughter Uganeswari Chandar, 20, a nursing student at Nanyang Polytechnic

#### **HE CAME FROM JOHOR**

"I've been working here for five years and I really appreciate that this is a society where all the different races are treated



equally, and no one is given preferential treatment based on their race. Coming from Malaysia, I

appreciate what he has done for Singapore." - Mr Forest Tham, 32, a credit controller in the finance industry booked a budget hotel for the night so he could queue overnight to pay tribute to Mr Lee

really see the difference and I

#### **'THE WAIT IS WORTH IT**

"The wait is definitely worth it, we would have waited longer. This is nothing compared to what Mr Lee



did for us. In particular, what he has done for the minority races is very important. I mean, we are given equal rights. That's the main thing we are very thankful for. The queue is very

systematic. Mr Lee's presence can still be felt in all the buildings around us, we see him everywhere."

 Mr R. Vijayakumar, 50, who closed his barber shop for the day. He was there with his whole family, including daughter Chandralekha, 20, a polytechnic student. His mother-in-law is due to undergo knee surgery tomorrow but insisted on paying her last respects to Mr Lee

#### MR LEE WAS 'THE MAN'

"Lee Kuan Yew, he's the man. My grandfather came to Singapore from India in the 1950s with nothing. He had to start from scratch. Today, my family is living comfortably, we have some assets, Singapore is our home

and we are proud of it." - Mr Manoj Nanwani, 40, sales executive in the real estate industry, who was in the queue with a friend from his army days, engineer Tay Wee Chin, 41

#### 'I WAS A GUARD AT ISTANA'

"When I was serving in the army in 1971, I was a guard stationed at the Istana. Every day at 5pm, I would see Mr Lee, dressed in a white shirt and white shorts, jogging or cycling. Sometimes he would be with the president, who was Dr Benjamin Sheares at that time.

On Sunday night, I had gone to Singapore General Hospital with flowers for him, and the next morning I read that he had passed away. It's very sad."

Mr Anthony Loke, 63, a chef who joined the queue outside Liang Court at 4pm after work





## Mr Lee leaves Istana for the last time

SRI TEMASEK: FAMILY SEND-OFF

People line streets to watch as gun carriage takes casket to Parliament

Mr Lee Hsien Yang and his

til 8pm on Saturday.

□ charyong@sph.com.sg

#### By CHARISSA YONG

OUTSIDE, thronging the roads, the public were waiting. But in- their grandfather, with Yipeng's side Sri Temasek on the grounds left arm resting at times on his of the Istana, the family of Mr Lee cousin's shoulder in solidarity. Kuan Yew gathered after sunrise The ceremonial procession on as the private wake for their pa- foot behind the carriage was led triarch drew to a close.

Just an hour later, the casket containing Mr Lee would leave trailed the carriage to the beat of a the two-storey house for the jour- military drum, as it descended the ney to Parliament House and four days of lying in state. wife Suet Fern walked

But for now, in quiet moments away from the public eye, the ex- hand-in-hand, their heads fretended families of Mr Lee and his quently bowed. Behind them, Mr late wife, Madam Kwa Geok Lee's grandchildren walked to-Choo, paid their respects. After them, Mr Lee's immedi-

ate family members stepped for- procession as she was unwell. ward to say individual goodbyes, all dressed in white shirts and black trousers or long skirts. The first was younger son Lee sentatives from Tanjong Pagar Hsien Yang, followed by his wife GRC, the constituency where the

Lee Suet Fern, and their sons late Mr Lee was an MP, and the Shengwu, Huanwu and Shaowu. Teck Ghee ward in Ang Mo Kio Mr Lee's daughter Wei Ling, who had lived with her late parents in the family home in Oxley Road, went next. Last of all came Mr Lee's elder Yam and Emeritus Senior Minis-

son, Prime Minister Lee Hsien ter Goh Chok Tong and staff paid Loong, his wife Ho Ching, and their respects, while a bagpiper children Xiuqi, Yipeng, Hongyi from the Singapore Gurkha Conand Haoyi. Over Monday and Tuesday, they had received and hosted

more than 5,200 visitors at the private wake held at the official resi- family proceeded separately by vedence of the Prime Minister in the hicle to Parliament House, where Istana grounds. Mr Lee died early Mr Lee's casket will lie in state unon Monday at the age of 91. Too soon, 9am came - the

hour when the gun carriage wait- casket when it arrived just before ing in the driveway outside would carry Mr Lee away.

Inside, the Lee family watched solemnly as a team of white-jack- removed the national flag from eted pallbearers from the defence Mr Lee's casket and marched off. services and police draped the Sin- the family was ushered forward. gapore flag over the casket. As the PM Lee stood front and centre, officers - their headgear removed his wife beside him. The grandas a mark of respect - carried the sons placed Mr Lee's portrait on a casket onto the gun carriage, and pedestal before the casket. the strains of Beethoven's Funeral March No. 1 filled the air, the famibowed once in front of the head of ly filed out of the hall and into the their family before departing. public eye.







Pallbearers draping the Singapore flag over Mr Lee's casket (above), and placing it onto the gun carriage (right). Mr Lee's grandsons (far right) Yipeng and Huanwu carrying a portrait of their grandfather as they lead the foot procession. Behind are Mr Lee House Yang and PM Lee and their wives and other family Then, as one, the Lee family















(Clockwise from top) The procession leaving Sri Temasek; Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, President Tony Tan Keng Yam and his wife, Mrs Mary Tan, and staff bowing their heads as the procession stopped at the main Istana building; Mr Lee's family members watching the procession as it crossed the Istana grounds; PM Lee and his wife, Ms Ho Ching, paying their respects before Mr Lee's casket left Sri Temasek. PHOTOS: NEO XIAOBIN, MCI



"Mr Lee Kuan Yew's body is now lying in state in Parliament House. I recall vividly his many speeches in Parliament.

The most awesome was the one he made in February 1977 at the old Parliament House. I had just been elected an MP. He was speaking on the debate on the President's Address. He spoke for nearly four hours, from 3.45pm to 7.30pm. I sat spellbound in the back row. No one moved.

He ended his speech with a rider on psephology. He asked

why Marine Parade, as a new HDB estate with more five-room and four-room flats than Buona Vista, another new estate, did worse electorally. Marine Parade won with 76 per cent of the votes cast as compared to 81 per cent for Buona Vista. Was it because the candidate in Marine Parade was new while Ang Kok Peng was known, being a second-term MP shifted from Crawford? Mr Lee did not provide the answer. He added that whoever could solve the

riddle would have one of the

qualifications to succeed him but only one. After his speech ended, there was a rush to the washroom. My bladder was about to burst. There was no time to think of the answer.' – Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, in a Facebook post yesterday

#### **5 VISITS AFTER FIRE ATTACK**

"In 2009, during a constituency event, somebody attacked me. I was recuperating in Singapore General Hospital. The elder Mr Lee visited me five times in total.

Each time, in my semi-conscious state, I was awakened by his voice: 'I am Lee Kuan Yew, I am Lee Kuan

I would open my eyes and, feeling very guilty, I would tell him weakly, 'You should be with your wife', because Mrs Lee was also very ill at that time. He didn't answer me me. It was because he still intended to visit me again."

## - Ang Mo Kio GRC MP Seng Han Thong at a tribute event held in Ang Mo Kio yesterday

THE 'MISSING' MUSICIANS

"I remember his attendance at a concert in 1990, where John Bingham played the 4th and 5th Beethoven piano concertos. Having joined the SSO board that year, I was seated in the row directly behind him and Mrs Lee on the balcony of Victoria

Concert Hall. Some time into the third movement, I remember Mr Lee kept glancing at his programme booklet, then would look at the orchestra for a few seconds before looking down again. This went on for some time.

At the intermission reception, he said to Mrs Lu Sinclair, the orchestra's manager: 'I see your booklet lists 80 musicians. I see only 53 on stage. What are the rest

Mrs Sinclair explained that the Beethoven concertos, as with many classical works, required fewer musicians. To which came the inevitable rapid-fire questions: 'What are the other musicians doing when not required?' and 'Are

they paid?' He was eventually mollified by Mrs Sinclair's explanation that some of the absentees had participated in a schools outreach programme during the week."

 Singapore Symphony Orchestra chairman Goh Yew Lin, in an e-mail to SSO directors and council members

#### **GREAT LEADER**

"I pay respects to a great leader of Singapore and of Asean. With his distinct vision and dedication, the late first Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew built Singapore into a modern, vibrant country and, with the same vision and commitment, he played an important role in the formation and rise of

He has left for us a lasting legacy and for that the people of the Asean community will forever remember him."

- Asean secretary-general Le Luong Minh, paying his respects at Parliament House

# Thousands continue to stream into tribute centres

TRIBUTES: A NATION GRIEVES

One resident tells of how she had received help in applying for a flat

#### By MIRANDA YEO

WHEN Madam Ramairthan with her husband and her grand-Muthukrishnan's house and provision shop in Kampong Eunos had school that afternoon. to make way for new Housing Board flats some 40 years ago, and he was visiting all the kamshe and her husband were caught pung to get to know the situation They had married in a tradition-

al Indian wedding ceremony and did not get an official marriage certificate. This meant that they powerful. could not apply for a new flat. from former Prime Minister Lee elections to hear the results of the Kuan Yew during a Meet-the-Peo- Tanjong Pagar seat that Mr Lee

"Mr Lee understood that it was dren," the 73-year-old said. wrote a letter for us, so we could were residents like Ms Daisy Yew,

Mr Lee also helped the family Lee's leadership. get financial aid to tide them over

"I feel like I have lost a father," she said, with tears in her eyes. She was among the thousands who continued to stream into com- Internal Security Act. munity tribute centres yesterday to pay their respects to Mr Lee, travel in her late 20s opened her who died on Monday morning. He

sites such as those in Tanjong Pa- elite and not the masses; you also gar and Kovan, as residents wait- realise just how safe it is here," ed in line to write condolence she said.

was one of those at Kovan Hub the people." Tribute Centre. She fondly re- miranday@sph.com.sg called her earliest meeting with Additional reporting by Samantha Boh Mr Lee in her family's kampung and Samantha Goh

near Bukit Timah Hill. She visited the tribute centre daughter, who had just finished

"I was about 10 years old then, in each and every one of them,"

"I remember that his way of speaking was very forceful and

She also remembered staying Desperate, they sought help up late on the night of the 1955

"My entire family leapt in exembarrassing for us to apply with citement on hearing PAP had won the Registry of Marriages because the seat. It was just so important we were already married with chil- to us because it was Mr Lee Kuan Yew's victory," she said. "He told us not to worry and Over at Taniong Pagar, there

apply for a four-room flat in Hou- 51, who works in a hotel. She was not always a fan of Mr

"In the past, I thought he was a dictator; I couldn't understand what he was doing," she said, referring to Mr Lee's resorting to detentions without trial under the But she said a year of overseas

"You see that the facilities in Long queues formed at tribute other countries are built for the

"And you know he made those Madam Chen Xin Ying, 66, tough decisions for the good of

### Commemorative album of public, private photos

LKY: A Pictorial Memoir features private and public pictures you much joy, as it has me." of Mr Lee, and is an abridged version of Lee Kuan Yew: A Life In trait of Mr Lee, overlaid with Pictures, which was published two years ago. The 192-page book also in-

cludes some new photos. Straits Times' picture editor captioned in English and Chinese. and quality. "In putting together \$26.75 (after GST).

Relive LKY's

greates

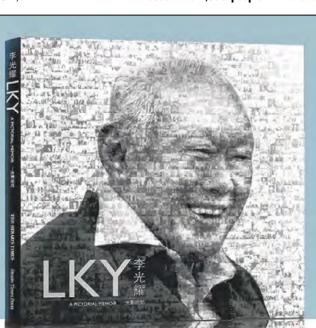
captured on camera

through the years

STRAITS Times Press has pub- this keepsake photo album, I hope lished a commemorative album of to recapture the greatest moformer Prime Minister Lee Kuan ments of LKY, the public and private man," she said.

> "Most of all, I hope it will bring The book's cover features a porclose to 1,200 smaller photographs of him, put together by Straits Times Press creative director Lock Hong Liang.

They were chosen by The The 188 photos in the book are



Get this commemorative photo album at bookstores for \$25 (before GST)





Stephanie Yeow for their strength and quality. "In putting together \$26.75 (after GST).

Ang Mo Kio GRC, where Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is an MP, organised a Tribute Night last night for people to pay tribute to Mr Lee Kuan Yew. PM Lee addressed the 2,500 people at the event, thanking Singaporeans for their love and support for his father. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

## Continue to work hard for a better tomorrow: PM Lee

By LIM YAN LIANG

from Third World to First, but the many years." work is not done yet, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said last

to the late leader. While Singapore has surmount - an MP, and Sengkang West. ed many challenges and should rightly celebrate its golden jubilee for a better tomorrow, he quoted father: "Speaking as his son, this year, Singaporeans need to Sun Yat-Sen, father of modern speaking on behalf of his family, keep on working hard to honour China, who said: "The revolution to you and to all the many others Prime Minister.

"We are sad, we are sorrowful,

this day, because he knew that to a success? Not yet. Is there still build well, Singapore must stand much to be done? Of course." FORMER Prime Minister Lee long after he's gone. And he has He added: "We still need to Kuan Yew had taken Singapore been preparing for that for many, work hard so tomorrow will be

night at a ceremony to pay tribute idents and grassroots leaders of can become a brilliant, bright lit-Ang Mo Kio GRC, for which he is tle red dot."

the memory of Mr Lee, said the has not yet succeeded, comrades, who have expressed their sentilet us give our best efforts." our founding father has left us. brates its golden jubilee this year, thank you." "But he has prepared us for he asked in Mandarin: "But are we yanliang@sph.com.sg

better, and our children will have PM Lee was speaking in both a brighter future. If we work hard English and Mandarin to 2,500 res- together, I think this little red dot

PM Lee thanked Singaporeans In urging people to work hard for their love and support for his ments, their sorrow, their love Similarly, as Singapore cele- over the last few days, I say, Nanyang Technological University professors, students and staff observing one minute of silence at a memorial service the school held in honour of the late Mr Lee yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



Osman Merican's most treasured memento from the 1965 Seap Games was not the medals he won but a letter of praise from Mr Lee. ST PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH

### Ex-national hurdler motivated by letter

By JONATHAN WONG

FORMER national hurdler Osman tendent. Said the 75-year-old reti-Merican won three medals at the ree yesterday: "Reading that let-South-east Asian Peninsular ter motivated me to believe I (Seap) Games in Kuala Lumpur in could be more than what I felt I 1965 but his most treasured me- was capable of achieving." mento is not the silverware but a Singapore National Olympic

letter signed by then Prime Minis- ed that Mr Lee's interest in local ter Lee Kuan Yew, given to sports never wavered. When Sin-Singapore's medallists, praising gapore won the Malaysia Cup in their effort in lifting the country, 1977, Mr Lee met the players at months after Singapore had sepa- and the coaches". rated from Malaysia.

brought into focus the qualities of Games two years later, Mr Lee, which will enable the people of was already planning ahead. Singapore to overcome so many cure our future as a nation." ing committee: "I remember re-

Those words from Mr Lee ceiving a 2am e-mail from him. (14.76sec) at the 1966 Asian the world." Games in Bangkok − and in his ca- | jonwong@sph.com.sg reer. He secured a scholarship Additional reporting by May Chen

from the police and rose to become an acting assistant superin-

Council's secretary-general from It is a typewritten, single-page 1972 to 1996, Mr S.S. Dhillon, not-In 2008 and just hours after

He wrote: "I would like you to the Republic won the bid to host MOTORISTS have a new way to The 40-year-old said it is "just was not an issue, he added. This know that your performance the inaugural Youth Olympic remember Mr Lee Kuan Yew by. something to remember Mr Lee was despite the fact that five of discipline, stamina and talent who was then Minister Mentor, Chew - long an admirer of Mr Lee in very high esteem". Recalled Mr Ng Ser Miang, the former Prime Minister to Sin- namics Mechanic workshop in its usual productivity. of their present difficulties and se- who was chairman of the organis- gaporeans.

drove him to succeed both on the He gave me advice on how we that went viral online and is being Facebook page was also inundated decals. We just let them take the sporting front - he set the nation- should organise the Games and used by many as their Facebook al record in the 110m hurdles how we can project the nation to profile picture. Inspired, he got

the contributions made by stituency."

Defence Minister and Leader of Nominated MP Thomas Chua, the House Ng Eng Hen and president of the Singapore Chi-Workers' Party chief Low Thia nese Chamber of Commerce and homage to Mr Lee.

mah told The Straits Times.

Times: "A representative group of to do so in Parliament."

ter and their impact on the county prime minister Wong Kan Industry, and Senior Minister of State Masagos Zulkifli.

Mr Vikram Nair of the People's bers of the Old Guard, grassroots ry remarks, in which she will re- Tamil. He said Mr Lee's vision of walks of life and the media. count the role Mr Lee played in a multiracial, equal society was

Mr Lee Kuan Yew," Madam Hali- of Singapore being an inclusive so- nel News Asia, Parliament's web-The list of speakers covers dif- many ordinary folk who want to LeeKuanYew.sg. ferent segments of the popula- pay tribute to Mr Lee, and I'm **rachelay@sph.com.sg** 

tion. Dr Ng told The Straits thankful to have the opportunity TODAY, Parliament will sit at MPs are invited to make their trib- Rounding off the list are Minis-4pm for a special session at which utes. These include office-holders ter of State Sim Ann, PAP MP MPs will pay tribute to Mr Lee and backbenchers, Government Christopher de Souza and Senior and non-Government MPs, senior Minister of State Indranee Rajah, The session, to last around two and newer MPs, and an MP from an MP for Tanjong Pagar GRC hours, will hear 11 MPs speak on the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew's con- who had been helping to take care of the needs of residents in Mr Speakers include former depu- Lee's ward in the past few years.

> Seng, unionist Seng Han Thong, served at the end of the tributes. All MPs, including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, will then pay Only invited guests can attend the sitting and they include mem-

A minute of silence will be ob-

mah Yacob will make introducto- Action Party (PAP) will speak in leaders, students, citizens from all Participants will wear black one of his greatest contributions, ribbons to mark the occasion, and Mr Lee, who represented Tan- adding: "Singapore is one of the readers can keep up with The jong Pagar for 60 years, died on best places to be a minority in." Straits Times' live coverage of the Another speaker is Nominated event at http://leekuanyew.strait-"The sitting is a special one as MP Chia Yong Yong, a wheelchair stimes.com/ST/lky-live-blog/ind there are no other items on the user with peroneal muscular dys- ex.html. The sitting will also be agenda except for this tribute to trophy, whose choice is reflective covered live on 938 LIVE, Chan-

ciety. Said Ms Chia: "There are site, and www.remembering-





A group of students from Nanyang Technological University made and distributed 1,500 black ribbons as a symbol of remembrance. NTU held a memorial service yesterday to honour Mr Lee. PHOTO: NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



Car workshop Dynamics Mechanic has already given away 800 stickers for motorists to paste on their vehicle's window. The decal features Mr Lee's silhouette within a black ribbon. PHOTO: DYNAMICS MECHANIC

## their effort in lifting the country, particularly as it came just the Istana and "encouraged them months after Singapore had sone and the coaches" 1977, Mr Lee met the players at the Istana and "encouraged them and the coaches" Different ways to remember Mr Lee

Car workshop co-owner Eric by. He's someone whom I've held - is giving out free car decals of People streamed into the Dy-

He saw the graphic of Mr Lee's from 9am yesterday. By 5pm, stunt, adding: "We don't promote silhouette within a black ribbon they were all gone. The firm's anything when people come to get his staff to print 800 stickers and and give out 800 every day till have something to remember our give them away for people to put "maybe Thursday or Friday". on their vehicle's window.

Kaki Bukit to pick up the decals with queries about the stickers. decal and go. This is just a good-Mr Chew intends to print more will gesture for car enthusiasts to

founding father by." The cost of 40 cents a sticker KOK XING HUI

his staff had put in long hours pro-

ducing the decals. This meant the

He said it was not a marketing

workshop was functioning at half

ALL Singapore Pools branches authorised retail outlets and Livewire venues will be closed on Sunday, the day of Mr Lee Kuan Yew's funeral, as a mark of respect. The 4D draw on Sunday

SINGAPORE POOLS CLOSURE

will still go ahead at 6.30pm at the Singapore Pools Building. Results will be posted on the Singapore Pools website after the draw. Normal operations, including betting and prize claims, will resume next



#### **BUN GOES STALE**

A SPECIAL commemorative bun that the BreadTalk chain started selling yesterday in memory of the late Mr Lee got

the thumbs-down. Filled with gula melakaflavoured grated coconut mixed with attap seed, the \$2 bun was given the Chinese name "Can't leave you" with the word "leave" swopped for Mr Lee's surname, which sounds similar. Proceeds were meant for charity.

But the play on words got irate people accusing BreadTalk of disrespect, and the chain pulled the bun from its shelves last night. It will still donate \$30,000 - the proceeds from the bun sales so far – to the Community





#### **BLACK SUNDAY**

SOCIAL media has been flooded with messages urging Singaporeans to wear black on Sunday in memory of Mr Lee, whose state funeral service will be held that day. The ground-up movement has gone viral, with several graphics and hash tags circulating online. But others have proposed alternative colours, such as white - the colour of the uniform of Mr Lee's People's Action Party or red, to celebrate his life.



#### MUSEUM DISPLAY

THIS barrister's wig was one of two bought by the late Mr Lee and his wife, Madam Kwa Geok Choo, when they were admitted to the Bar. The wig was made by

Ravenscroft, an established wig and robe maker in London, and given to the National Museum Collection by Mr Lee.

It is among the items on display at the National Museum for the exhibition In Memoriam: Lee Kuan Yew, which is open from 10am to 8pm, until April 26. Admission is free.

#### TIME OFF FOR WORKERS

OCBC, UOB and Citi.

SEVERAL companies have given their staff time off to attend the public wake of Mr Lee at Parliament House. Some are providing transport too. They include CapitaLand, Singapore Press Holdings, Keppel Group, DBS Bank,



## Foreign heads of state to attend funeral

Singapore to host some of the world's most protected leaders

By RAVI VELLOOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A PHALANX of foreign leaders will descend on Singapore over the weekend for the funeral of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, a challenge in protocol and logistics as the island hosts some of the world's most protected leaders.

As flags of diplomatic missions in Singapore fluttered at half-mast in respect for Mr Lee, the foreign ministry in Beijing said a Chinese leader would attend Sunday's funeral service in Singapore for Mr Lee, without giving names.

Whoever attends from China will join leaders including Australia's Tony Abbott, India's Narendra Modi, Indonesia's Joko Widodo, South Korea's Park Geun Hye, Cambodia's Hun Sen, Myanmar's Thein Sein, Thailand's Prayut Chan-ocha and a host of others, including possibly Japan's Shinzo Abe.

The Japanese leader is trying to juggle his legislative agenda to

travel to Singapore on Sunday, government officials said.

Many of them will be here for just the day, departing promptly after the public ceremony at the University Cultural Centre. That will require a high measure of coordination and logistics in security terms, traffic control as well as aircraft departure times.

The US flags at the embassy in Napier Road and at Sembawang Wharves were at half-mast, as were all three Australian flags at the residence of Canberra's envoy to Singapore Philip Green.

The Australian and New Zealand parliaments were among those which passed condolence motions for Mr Lee.

Describing Australia and Singapore as "natural partners", Mr Abbott said he hoped that over time, the relationship between his country and Singapore would be "as easy, close and as familial as it has long been with New Zealand".

Mr Abe, Mr Abbott, Philippine President Benigno Aquino, Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, former Thai premier Yingluck Shinawatra and United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki Moon were among the dozens of world leaders who drove down to the Singapore missions in their cities to record condolences for Mr Lee.

In Beijing, Executive Vice-Premier Zhang Gaoli was the most senior Chinese leader to record his condolences in the book opened at the Singapore Embassy.

"The Chinese people will always remember the outstanding contributions he made in fostering friendly China-Singapore ties and cooperation. I solemnly express my heartfelt condolences at the passing of Mr Lee," he wrote.

A condolence book will also be opened in the US Congress today. Also honouring Mr Lee was his alma mater, Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam College, which

lowered its flag to half-mast on Monday. An obituary notice on the college website described Mr Lee as "the most significant statesman ruption-free nation. Mr Lee's passing, nearly a quarter-century after he stepped down from leadership, continued to make news around the region.

| velloor@sph.com.sg

lege". Mr Lee graduated at the very top of his cohort, above two

contemporaries who became pro-

fessors of law at Cambridge, said

the college, which currently has

28 Singaporean students on its

cover of South Korea's biggest

newspaper, Chosun Ilbo, with the

story focusing on his Oxley Road

home, a "humble house" that is

testament to Mr Lee's integrity

and determination to build a cor-

Yesterday, Mr Lee was on the

## Ancestral home to be turned into tourist spot

DABU (Guangdong) – The authorities in a county in southern China are spending 40 million yuan (S\$8.8 million) to turn Mr Lee Kuan Yew's ancestral home into a tourist attraction, reported Hong

Kong's Wen Wei Po daily. The plan is to transform the site in Dabu county, Guangdong province, into an international rural tourist destination infused with Chinese Hakka cultural characteristics, the report said.

Work on the project officially began last year, it said, and the first phase, which comprises a Lee Kuan Yew Memorial Hall, will be completed by the end of this year.

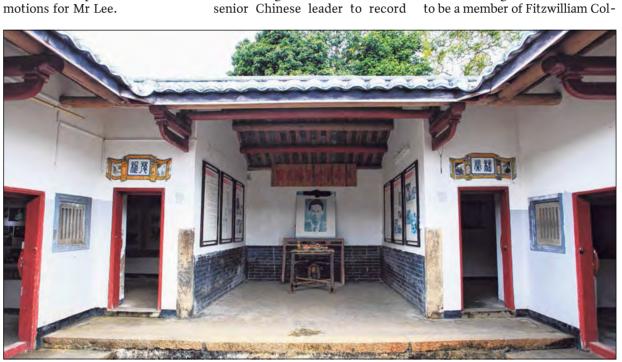
Mr Lee's great-grandfather Li

Muwen built the ancestral home, named Zhonghandi, in 1884 with money he had earned in Singa-

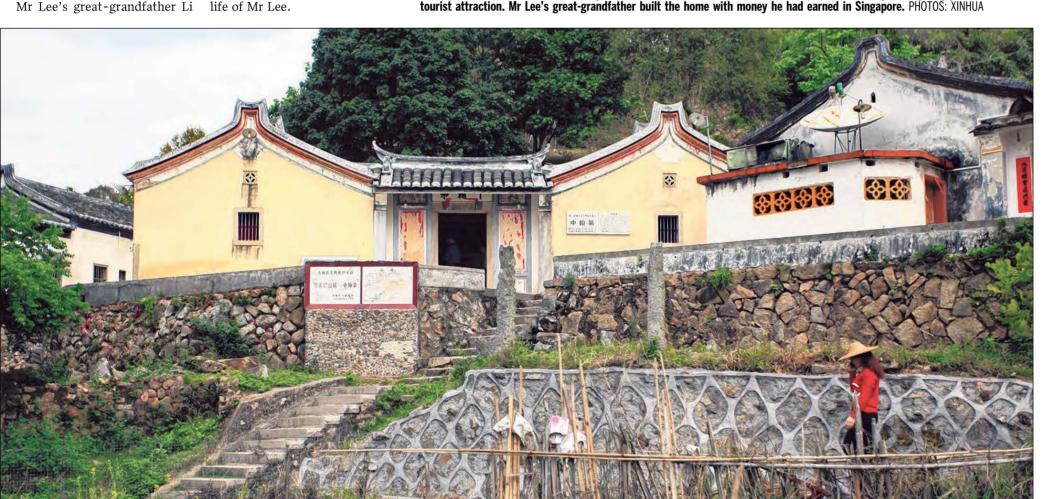
Between 2007 and 2008, the house and its surroundings were refurbished by the local authorities, Wen Wei Po said.

They also set up exhibitions detailing the Lee family genealogy, Mr Lee's family and political life as well as an introduction of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the report added.

It cited an unnamed Dabu county official as saying that many local and foreign tourists visit the area every year to understand the



The local authorities are transforming Mr Lee's ancestral home (above and below) in Dabu county, Guangdong province, into a



### New Zealand MP recalls the haircut S'pore gave him

AS NEW ZEALAND ministers, led by Deputy Prime Minister Bill English, paid tributes to Mr Lee Kuan Yew in Parliament, one legislator's eulogy stood out.

Former Labour leader Phil Goff (below) said Singapore's founding Prime Minister had not only inspired him, but his tough policies had also inflicted a free haircut on him in his salad days.

Mr Lee's 1965 speech on Singapore's separation from Ma-

laysia was "the first political speech that ever impacted me", Mr Goff said in the session on Tuesday. " I think I

12-vear-old. a child at that time spoke

with such power and emotion about why he was taking Singapore out of Malaysia and, decades later, I still remember that as the first political speech that ever impacted on me in that way."

Mr Goff added that his mother was an admirer of Mr Lee. "In 1977, as a student having gone six years without a haircut, passing through Singapore, I was given my first haircut by Customs officials at the airport as a price for entry," Mr Goff said.

"My mother congratulated him (Mr Lee) on achieving something that nobody else had been able to do for years before that time," he told Parliament.

## 'White trash' warning spurred Australia to be better: Abbott

By JONATHAN PEARLMAN FOR THE STRAITS TIMES **IN SYDNEY** 

IN AUSTRALIA, Mr Lee Kuan Yew is widely remembered for a rebuke he famously delivered more than 30 years ago.

During a visit in 1980, Mr Lee warned that Australia needed to open its economy and try to reduce inflation and unemployment, or risk becoming the "poor white trash of Asia".

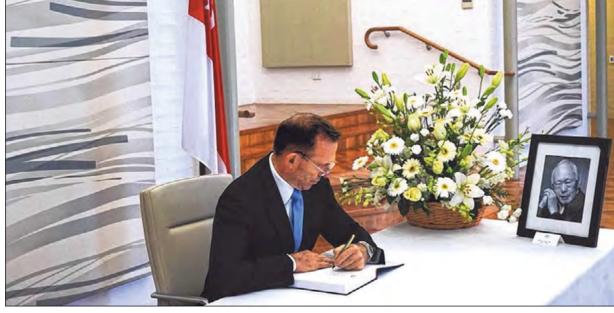
Today, Mr Lee's warning is widely regarded as typically stern, but both prescient and fair.

Delivering a condolence motion speech in the Australian Parliament on Tuesday, Prime Minister Tony Abbott noted Mr Lee's warning and praised him for "spur(ring) this country at a critical time in our history to be better than we might have been".

Praising Mr Lee for helping to achieve "one of the most remarkable economic success stories in history", Mr Abbott said the "great nation-builder" had been a trailblazer for other countries such as South Korea and China.

"Lee Kuan Yew did not just lead his country; he made his country," he added.

"Singapore and Australia are natural partners, and I hope that over time, our relationship with Singapore will be as easy, as close and as familial as it has long been with New Zealand. And, if so, that too will be part of Lee Kuan Yew's legacy."



Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott signing the condolence book at the Singapore High Commission in Canberra on Tuesday. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The death of a man many called a "political giant" has this week generated a vast amount of coverage in Australia, where he was both praised for his transformation of Singapore and condemned for his harsh approach to the political opposition. But almost every article and news broadcast referred to that 1980 comment - and it is now largely seen in Australia as sage advice.

Indeed, the comment appears to have had a lasting influence, perhaps more than Mr Lee could have foreseen.

When he returned to Australia

in the 1990s and was reminded by reporters of his remarks, Mr Lee would acknowledge that Australia had avoided its potentially bleak fate. His remark, he often added, was not meant to "diminish" Australians, but to spur them on.

Most observers believe that this was in large part because Australia had changed course and headed in the direction that Mr Lee had been advocating, towards a more open economy and a more open approach to the nation's place in the region. In the process, Australia and Singapore have become increasingly close trading

and diplomatic partners.

This influence over Australia's development was noted this week by Mr Bob Hawke, who was prime minister from 1983 to 1991 and steered the country through a period of liberal economic reforms.

Saying Mr Lee's words were "right", Mr Hawke described his old friend and golfing buddy as an outspoken leader who had a "great influence on this country and on my own approach to my task here as prime minister".

"His harsh but fair comment helped galvanise my determination to undertake the reforms that

would save us from that fate and set us on a better path," he wrote in The Australian Financial Review on Monday.

"I doubt that I ever enjoyed more intellectually stimulating conversations with a fellow leader... A great bloke and, by any standards, a great man."

Mr Hawke's successors continued to regard Mr Lee as a source of wisdom on the region and its

As Australia began to prosper, bilateral ties blossomed and Singapore became one of its biggest foreign investors. Singaporean students have long flocked to Australian universities, while Australia's major banks, mining companies and engineering firms all have offices in Singapore.

According to Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Singapore is now the country's largest trade and investment partner in Asean and its fifth-largest trading partner overall. Fittingly, in 2003, Australia signed a free trade agreement with Singapore - its first such open trading deal in 20 years.

Little surprise then that Mr Lee received warm praise this week from Australian leaders, including Prime Minister Abbott.

"Our region owes much to Lee Kuan Yew," Mr Abbott said.

"Here in Australia and beyond, leaders sought and learnt from his wise counsel... At every stage, Australia and Singapore have stood shoulder to shoulder. We continue to do so today, as we salute one of the significant leaders of our time."

Analysts said the roots of Mr Lee's early reservations about Australia could be traced back to the mutual distrust between Canberra and the ascending local leadership in pre-independence Singapore. Australian intelligence officials reportedly feared that Mr Lee would support the communists in the region and wanted Singapore to be part of Malaysia.

Dr Alison Broinowski, a researcher at the Australian National University College of Asia and the Pacific, said Mr Lee received "condescension from Australian leaders" during his early years as leader. As Singapore's economy boomed, Dr Broinowski said, Mr Lee "relished" the opportunity to point out to Australia that it was falling behind.

In Australia, most analysts this week gave high praise to Mr Lee's nation-building legacy but criticised his stifling of the political opposition and of press freedoms.

"Lee Kuan Yew built Singapore into a fully developed economy, but he left it a half-developed democracy," columnist Peter Hartcher wrote in the Sydney Morning Herald on Tuesday.

Said Dr Broinowski: "There have been some shudders at the way opposition leaders have been treated and at some of its social policies, but there has been no doubt about Singapore's success." **⋈** jonathanmpearlman@gmail.com

Mr Lee Kuan Yew



# "Young man, speak your mind. Tell me what you think. I am not a mind reader."

- Mr Lee Kuan Yew to The Star's Wong Chun Wai in August 2000



AUG 17, 2000: Senior Minister Lee holding a press conference at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Kuala Lumpur. Mr Lee was the only Singapore leader who had personally known all of Malaysia's prime ministers – from Tunku Abdul Rahman to Datuk Seri Najib Razak. ST FILE PHOTO

# He had Malaysia's interest at heart too

By WONG CHUN WAI THE STAR

IT WAS August 2000 and Mr Lee Kuan Yew's first visit to Malaysia in 10 years. A series of small meetings had been arranged for him. I was chosen to meet the legendary founding father of Singapore with five other young newspaper editors

We were well aware of his reputation for being intimidating and intellectually arrogant. We had all heard enough stories of him expecting members of the media to be well prepared for any interview he granted.

But he was pleasantly relaxed. It was his three aides who looked tense as they took notes.

"Young man, speak your mind. Tell me what you think. I am not a mind reader," he said, looking at me to start the discussions.

And the off-the-record conversation flowed from there.

Despite having a reputation for being intimidating and intellectually arrogant, Singapore's late founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was a man who had the intertwined interests of both his country and Malaysia close at heart.

The issues dividing Malaysia and Singapore included Malaysia's supply of water to Singapore, the relocation of Customs and Immigration facilities for Malaysian rail passengers in Singapore and the withdrawal of Malaysian funds from the island republic's pension scheme.

It was clear that he was very much in the picture even if he was no longer in the driving seat.

After all, Mr Lee remained the only Singapore leader who had personally known all our Malaysian prime ministers – from Tunku Abdul Rahman to Datuk Seri Najib Razak. He was clear on how his peers built up Malaysia, even as he had his own vision for Singapore and the historical link-

ages between the two neighbours.

But there were two issues that nagged him during our meeting – Anwar Ibrahim and Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS).

He made no secret of his concern that young Malays were drawn to PAS. It disturbed him that the Islamist party was becoming a serious player in the political landscape, with only moderate Muslims and non-Muslims keeping it from becoming more influen-

The growing influence of PAS and the controversial issues with regard to race and religion may have been a Malaysian problem, but it was also a cause for concern to the predominantly Chinese population of Singapore.

The current push by PAS for the implementation of hudud laws would have disturbed him greatly. He would have been shocked to learn that Umno representatives in the Kelantan State Assembly actually voted for the hudud enact-

ment.
"I would sleep more comfortably with Umno in power as it is a party I have known since the 1940s," he told a press conference at the end of his visit.

Anwar's jail sentence and whether he still had a future in politics dominated the discussions.

It was clear that the street demonstrates the street demonstrates and the street demonstrates are street demonstrates.

It was clear that the street demonstrations by Anwar and his supporters troubled him.

Mr Lee said he felt sorry for former prime minister Mahathir

Mohamad for paying a "very heavy price" in the sacking of Anwar and the subsequent events.

One fellow journalist recalled that Mr Lee "almost fell out of his chair" when told that many Malaysians were unhappy with the outcome of the trial and the jail sentence. "He questioned why young Malaysians should be unhappy when the entire procedure of the law had been properly carried out," said this journalist.

The world has changed. Singapore has changed and so has Malaysia. The days of a strong government in most democracies, governing with a sizeable majority, were also over.

y, were also over.

Both Prime Minister Najib Ra-

zak and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong have to deal with a different generation of demanding citizens with little sense of their respective country's traumatic history.

Nor do they care about the early struggling years of nation-hood. Instead, they expect their leaders to allow them greater democratic space, be more accountable and, at the same time, maintain a decent economic growth

In the case of Malaysia, where the issues are more complex, material development alone may not be enough.

Malaysia and Singapore may be different entities, but we are mirror images of each other in many aspects, as Mr Lee repeatedly mentioned. And the man who looked into that mirror the most, has now passed on.

■ Wong Chun Wai is chief executive officer of Star Publications

# Forgiving bitter past for interests of the present

"ONE lesson that Lee Kuan Yew left us has been widely overlooked, and it has particular relevance for the rise of China. When it came to the sins of the past, he put reason ahead of emotion. A consummate pragmatist, Lee did not allow the many wrongs of history to rankle and fester, which allowed his country to benefit immensely...

"Just as Lee forgave British colonial arrogance, so did he forgive Japanese World War II military brutality. Unlike China and Korea, Singapore nurtures no sense of grievance towards its former occupiers, despite the hardship and exceptional cruelty of the wartime Japanese presence.

"Arbitrary face-slapping and public urination were the least of it. The Japanese chose Chinese Singaporeans, three-quarters of the population, for the worst treatment due to their suspected loyalties to China. The occupiers singled out those who had soft hands and wore glasses – marks

of the leadership class – for execution. Many thousands died.

"Yet Singaporeans after the war, under Lee's governance, set aside these bitter memories of the past for the better interests of the present. Recognising and admiring the extraordinary rise of modern Japan and its rapid recovery from war and defeat, in his scramble to create jobs for Singaporeans, Lee turned to the Japanese for advice on shipbuilding and electronics, successfully luring Japanese investment to help Singapore create a job-rich manufacturing economy.

"Americans eventually joined in and now have invested twice as much in tiny Singapore as in all of China."

 MR JOHN CURTIS PERRY, who teaches maritime history at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, writing in the Wall Street Journal on Tuesday. He is finishing a book about the implausibility of Singapore's success.

#### By STEVE FORBES

LEE Kuan Yew was one of the great statesmen of the post-WWII era. He made Singapore an economic powerhouse, creating an environment in which human ingenuity can thrive. He didn't tolerate corruption. He kept a tight grip on spending and pushed down taxes. He knew the folly of weak money; the Singapore dollar looks like the Rock of Gibraltar compared with most currencies – including the US dollar, most of the time.

Lee simultaneously demonstrated that sound finance can coexist with soundly thought-out social programmes. He pursued a vigorous housing programme that enabled people who didn't earn high incomes to buy their homes; his was a model for how subsidies need not lead to the housing-related disasters that have plagued the United States. Singapore's healthcare system has provided comprehensive coverage to its people without the rationing, high costs and dicey care that characterise so many others. Singapore's pension system avoided the pay-as-yougo trap that's hurtling those in oth-

er countries towards insolvency. Under Lee's guidance, Singapore developed a real-life play-

## His influence extended far beyond Singapore

book for how an impoverished country can flourish. When Lee became Prime Minister in 1959, Singapore's per capita income was little more than US\$400. Today it is over US\$56,000.

Critics will tell you that Lee was no Jeffersonian democrat, and he wasn't. But he allowed elections, even if he didn't give the opposition a lot of breathing room (though if he had, he would have won handily). More important, under his leadership Singapore developed a thriving middle class, along with the civic institutions and habits that are crucial to a sustainable democracy. Too many times we've seen that merely holding an election does not a lasting democracy make. Singapore's political system is evolving in a way that bodes well for long-term stability.

or long-term stability. Early in his political career, Lee shed his socialist sympathies and became a hardheaded pragmatist. In the 1950s and 1960s, Lee demonstrated superb political skill in maintaining Singapore's independence in the face of real hostility from two immensely larger neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia.

But Lee's influence extended far beyond his small country. One wishes he could have been the leader of a country like Indonesia or China. (He would have conducted US foreign policy better than almost all of our Secretaries of State.) He supported US efforts in trying to save South Vietnam from communist takeover by the North. Although the US lost that war, Lee argued that our long effort gave the rest of Asia the time needed to develop the strength to resist communist takeovers. He strongly supported a robust US role in the region as a counter to the old Soviet Union and China. To listen to Lee talk about the

world situation was an enlightening delight. During one of our most memorable visits, he recounted the story of his meeting with Deng Xiaoping soon after Deng had won the reins of power and was mulling over how to go about rebuilding China in the aftermath of Mao's horrific Cultural Revolution. Deng's trip to Singapore in 1978 was his first and only trip there. He was stunned by what he saw in Singapore: a booming area populated by Chinese that was independent and politically stable. "How did you do it?" Deng asked Lee. Deng threw aside his itinerary and spent hour after hour in intense conversation with Lee.

When Deng returned to China, he began putting Lee's precepts to work, creating special Singapore-like economic development zones along China's coast. Thus was China's historic and rapid modernisation set in motion.

One of our journalistic coups occurred in 2001, when Lee Kuan Yew kindly accepted our offer to become a Forbes columnist. It's so unfortunate that the civilised world has lost such a wise voice at

this troubled time.

■ Steve Forbes is chairman and editor-in-chief of Forbes Media

#### FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM

## Mr Lee Kuan Yew





Mr Lee Kuan Yew as a baby. This photo was taken after he won first place in a baby show.



Mr Lee, at two, on a tricycle in his Neil Road home in 1925 with his father, Mr Lee Chin Koon. The family had Javanese



In a family photo taken outside their Norfolk Road home, (back row) Mr Lee, at age 13, is flanked by mother Chua Jim Neo and father Lee Chin Koon. In front are siblings (from left) Suan Yew, three; Monica, seven; Freddy, nine; and Dennis, 11.



Mr Lee (in a dark suit) with (clockwise from left) siblings Monica, Dennis, Freddy and Suan Yew, and parents Chua Jim Neo and Lee Chin Koon. The photo was taken the night before Mr Lee left for England to further his studies.

# Mr Lee through the years

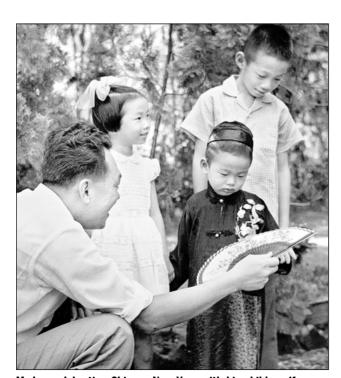
Singaporeans knew Mr Lee as the tough, plain-speaking Prime Minister. But he also had a private side. These pictures from the family album show him as a child, a young man, with his life partner Kwa Geok Choo and the family they raised.



Mr Lee (right) and Ms Kwa (second from right) in Punggol river with their friends, (from left) neighbour Chua Swee Sin; Mr Lee's sister Monica; and Raffles College friend Kwan Sai Kheong and his wife Polly.



Mr Lee carrying his first grandson, Yipeng, in 1982, while Mrs Lee helps their only granddaughter, Xiuqi, two, stroke Yipeng on his head. The children are PM Lee Hsien Loong's.



Mr Lee celebrating Chinese New Year with his children (from left) Wei Ling, Hsien Yang and Hsien Loong.



An eight-year-old Lee Hsien Loong with Mr Lee on Pulau Ubin in June 1960. As a young boy, PM Lee often accompanied his father on his constituency visits.



Mr and Mrs Lee at a party in 1955. Mr Lee was a chain-smoker until 1957, when he began losing his voice. He kicked the habit and later became hyper-allergic to cigarette smoke.