

## **NATIONAL INTEGRATION COUNCIL SEEKS TO CREATE A VIBRANT PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND PEOPLE (3P) NETWORK TO SUPPORT SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

A vibrant public, private and people (3P) network is instrumental in supporting social integration. The National Integration Council (NIC), led by its Chairman Dr Vivian Balakrishnan engaged and connected with key stakeholders from community organisations, unions, schools and the public sector in a close-door dialogue on 12 January 2010 to seek views on how more can be done to create better support for integration initiatives. About 120 members from the NIC and its various Working Groups and key stakeholders participated in the dialogue. Dr Balakrishnan is also the Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports.

2 During the dialogue, Dr Balakrishnan gave an update on strategies and ideas to open the doors, hearts and minds of both the newcomers to our society and Singaporeans. These included the uptake of the \$10 million Community Integration Fund (CIF) and key projects supported under the Fund since its launch in September 2009, as well as new initiatives to increase the English language proficiencies of new immigrants. Dr Balakrishnan also shared on the launch of the pilot Singapore Citizenship Journey aimed to integrate new citizens to our society.

### **Opening Doors - Community Integration Fund**

3 Launched in September 2009, the Community Integration Fund (CIF), a \$10 million fund over three years has helped create more opportunities for interaction between Singaporeans and new citizens by supporting 11 community celebrations with both local and new immigrant participants<sup>1</sup>. In all, over 50,000 locals and non-locals in Singapore have bonded closer together and learnt more about our multi-cultural heritage through CIF-supported projects.

### **Opening Minds – English Language Initiatives**

4 The NIC will encourage more immigrants to take up English language courses. A website will be launched, which the public can use to search for an English course that will suit their schedule, learning needs, and budget. The NIC will also increase publicity of language courses at immigration touchpoints, including getting community organisations to encourage their members to go for courses. More brochures highlighting the many different training avenues will also be made available.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Annex A for examples of supported CIF projects.

## **Opening Hearts – Singapore Citizenship Journey**

5 The pilot of the Singapore Citizenship Journey will be launched in March 2010, in three group representation constituencies (GRCs). More details will be announced at a later date. The Singapore Citizenship Journey will be an enhanced orientation programme for new citizens, incorporating interactive online elements, site visits to places of historical significance, and grassroots sharing sessions. All new citizens will go through this Journey, which will culminate in a citizenship ceremony. The Journey aims to help open the hearts of new citizens to fully integrate into life in the Singapore society.

6. See Annex B for a list of updates on NIC initiatives by National Integration Working Groups.

### EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY INTEGRATION FUND PROJECTS

No.	Project Description
1.	<p><b>Title of project: Mid-Autumn Festival Celebrations</b>  <b>Organisers: Tian Fu Club and Singapore Amoy Association</b>  <b>Date of event: 3 Oct 09</b></p> <p>Tian Fu Club collaborated with the Singapore Amoy Association (SAA) to organise a joint Mid Autumn Festival celebration. The programme consisted of two parts –a dialogue session where four speakers (two locals and two new immigrants) shared their experiences and views on integration in Singapore, followed by a dinner. The event drew more than 300 participants consisting of 100 Tian Fu members, 150 SAA members and more than 50 invited guests from other community organisations.</p>
2.	<p><b>Title of project: Narpani-Vasantham Family Day Carnival 2009 @ Jurong Bird Park</b>  <b>Date of event: 8 Nov 09</b>  <b>Organiser: Narpani Pearavai, PA Indian Activity Executive Committees Council (IAECC)</b></p> <p>This event engaged new citizens and permanent residents, to promote Indian culture and family bonding, and served as a platform for different ethnic groups to interact. Spanning a full day at the Jurong Bird Park, it was carried out in a carnival setting to provide families with an avenue to bond and get together. The attractions at the bird park, an “Amazing Race” for families, fringe activities like face painting, henna painting, and games, engaged and bonded the participants. About 10,000 participants attended the event, where Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was Guest-of-Honour.</p>
3.	<p><b>Title of project: The Peranakan Festival 2009</b>  <b>Date of event: 27 Nov to 6 Dec 09</b>  <b>Organiser: The Peranakan Association</b></p> <p>The festival consisted of various events, all open to the public, to raise awareness of Peranakan Culture, and highlight the harmonious blend of different cultures. The festival consciously sought to propagate the idea by which all racial communities may in the steady progress of time be welded into one community having a common national identity, while each community retains or preserves its own culture, custom, tradition and religion. Deliberate attempts were also made to reach out and welcome new residents, to invite and encourage them to</p>

No.	Project Description
	learn about Singaporean culture and encourage participation in the various activities. The weeklong event attracted approximately 25,000.
4.	<p><b>Title of project: 2010@Labrador: Celebration &amp; Integration</b>  <b>Organiser: Hua Yuan Association</b>  <b>Date of event: 31 Dec 09</b></p> <p>This year end celebration event at Labrador Park, 31 Dec 09, brought together new Singapore citizens (SCs), Permanent Residents (PRs) and locals to usher in the New Year. The event provided a platform for young people from local community and immigrant groups to interact, thereby facilitating better understanding and formation of new friendships. Multi racial groups were also invited to perform to promote racial harmony.</p> <p>The event attracted approximately 15,000 people, and was co-organised by Hua Yuan and Radin Mas Citizens' Consultative Committee (CCC). Radin Mas CCC invited local residents staying near Tanjong Pagar, Redhill and Telok Blangah, while Hua Yuan mobilised its members and liaised with student bodies to invite Chinese students.</p> <p>Running from 10 pm to 6 am, the event involved a series of activities such as stage performances by different ethnic groups, movie marathon, barbeques, game stalls, youth dancing party, children and family activities, and a lucky draw.</p>
5.	<p><b>Title of project: River Hongbao 2010</b>  <b>Date of event: 12 Feb to 20 Feb 2010</b>  <b>Organiser: Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations, Singapore Press Holding, Singapore Tourism Board and People's Association</b></p> <p>River Hong Bao celebrations began in 1987 as an annual large-scale signature cultural event. Its objectives are: to create a platform whereby Singaporeans and residents in Singapore can celebrate Chinese New Year together and promote community and family bonding amongst different races in Singapore.</p> <p>RHB 2010 is expected to attract a crowd of 300,000. The organisers have proposed the following enhancements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overall integration-centric theme throughout the festival.</li> <li>- Immigrant communities to be represented on organising committee.</li> <li>- Involve immigrant associations in performances and booths.</li> <li>- Offer a variety of cuisines and performances to highlight the diversity within the Chinese community.</li> </ul>

No.	Project Description
	<p>- The final day of the celebrations will focus on social integration of new immigrants and locals.</p>
6.	<p><b>Title of project: Community Integration Quiz @ South West (tentative working title)</b>  <b>Organiser: South West Community Development Council</b>  <b>Date of event: December 2009 to March 2010</b></p> <p>The Community Integration Quiz @ South West will adopt a quiz format to engage and facilitate interaction between locals and new citizens and to deepen their understanding of one another and living in Singapore. Participants will go through qualifying rounds in teams, where they are posed general and thematic questions about Singapore. These questions will be compiled concertedly with community and corporate stakeholders, and span categories including culture, history, lingo and cuisine. The quiz will comprise of three stages i.e. qualifying round, semi-finals and finals, which will take place at community places for visibility and mass participation.</p> <p>32 teams of five members (160 participants in total) will be formed. Each team must consist of at least two ethnic groups and have at least one new SC or PR. An estimated 4000 residents will be involved in event participation and another 6000 residents will be engaged through virtual participation through channels such as the CDC website, YouTube and Facebook etc.</p> <p>The wider community will also be engaged in the process through submission of questions for the Quiz, participation in the events and online quizzes, and publicity in My Paper (supporting newspaper).</p>
7.	<p><b>Title of project: Rafta Rafta (All in Good Time)</b>  <b>Organiser: Hum Theatre Limited</b>  <b>Date of event: April 2010</b></p> <p>“Rafta Rafta” will examine the challenges faced by an immigrant Punjabi family, their marital woes, and inter-racial difficulties. The play deals with setting out and resolving these various issues through comedy.</p> <p>Through the play, Hum Theatre hopes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address issues commonly experienced by the Indian community, regardless of their ethnicity or language</li> <li>- Provide an environment for the exchange of ideas, creative collaboration, and working processors for individuals (students or professionals) from across the Indian community.</li> <li>- In a language commonly understood by Indians of any background.</li> </ul>

<b>No.</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
	- English plays with Indian sensibilities to reach a wider audience base.

## UPDATES ON NIC INITIATIVES BY NATIONAL INTEGRATION WORKING GROUPS

Initiative	Description	Key Strategy
<b>Working Group for Community</b>		
Community Integration Fund	Since launch in September 2009 to open doors between locals and non-locals, and create more opportunities for interaction, there were 60 enquiries for the CIF and 24 applications, of which 11 have been successful, with another six pending evaluation. In all, over 50,000 locals and non-locals in Singapore have bonded closer together and learnt more about our multi-cultural heritage through CIF-supported projects.	Opening Doors
English Language Initiatives	To help those interested in improving their command of English, the NIC will increase awareness of available English courses by launching an English course information portal. This information portal will consolidate information on the English courses in Singapore, and will be made available in English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil to ensure that everyone will be able to use the portal.  NIC will also be raising awareness on the need to understand and speak English well at key touch-points, through materials such as brochures.	Opening Minds
Singapore Citizenship Journey	The pilot of the Singapore Citizenship (SC) Journey will be launched in March 2010, in three group representation constituencies (GRCs) - Tanjong Pagar, West Coast and Sembawang. The SC Journey will retain and augment key National Education Experience Programme (NEEP) components as part of the SC Journey; the grassroots component will be significantly enhanced for the pilot. The online programme will also be a key vehicle to deliver functional information on Singapore's cultures, values and key institutions. An online quiz component in English will be included to assess prospective new citizens' knowledge of Singapore. There will also be optional components, such as tours and community activities, to deepen the integration experience for newcomers.	Opening Hearts
<b>Working Group for Schools</b>		
Best Practices Package	The <b>Best Practices Package</b> will contain examples of good integration practices and "what works". This package will be shared with schools and educational institutions, to serve as a resource on effective integration activities and potential sources of funding such as the Community Integration Fund, and to encourage schools and institutions to adapt and use those which are best suited to their individual needs. The Best Practices Package will be launched at first Symposium on Integration in Schools.	Opening Minds
Symposium on Integration in Schools	The first <b>Symposium on Integration in Schools</b> will be held in April 2010. The Symposium will be a platform for schools and institutes to share their experiences and how they have found	Opening Minds

	integration useful for their students. It will also raise awareness among schools and institutions and encourage each of them to take more ownership and drive their individual integration agenda.	
Facilitating integration between students and the wider community	<p>The NIWGS will encourage more <b>partnerships between national and international schools</b> in the areas of student and professional exchanges, joint celebrations of national/festive events, sports and games, and learning camps. Existing collaborations in these areas should also be deepened and sustained over time. For instance, students from national and international schools could participate in joint Community Involvement Programmes (CIPs) to help the less fortunate in Singapore.</p> <p>In addition to this, the NIWGS is working with the People's Association (PA) and the Community Development Councils (CDCs) to identify integration initiatives and relevant grassroots events, like festive celebrations and sports clubs, to invite students and their families to participate in</p>	Opening Doors
Curriculum 2015	As part of Curriculum 2015, MOE will look at how it can help students develop cross-cultural skills to prepare them for an increasingly globalised world. National Education in schools will also explore how the dynamism of modern Singapore draws from its being an open and well-integrated society. For instance, MOE's National Education and Service Learning Seminar in Nov 09 discussed the challenges related to integration and emphasised that such efforts are crucial in maintaining racial harmony and in building a strong sense of belonging and national identity.	Opening Hearts
Meals@Home Programme	<p>The Working Group for Schools would like local students and newcomers to bring their friendships beyond the classroom. To this end, the Working Group for Schools has been studying existing efforts and practices where schools encourage interaction between their local and international students in a social setting, such as by going for meals and outings or simply spending time together at the home of the local student over weekends or holidays.</p> <p>These "<b>Meals@Home</b>" programmes are ideas which some schools can build onto their existing buddy schemes. Suggestions on how other schools can implement such an effective programme will be shared with all national schools in the next few months.</p>	Opening Doors
<b>Working Group for Workplaces</b>		
Bridging the Language Barrier	There are ongoing conversational English courses for foreign workers organised by the Migrant Workers Centre.	Opening Minds
<b>Working Group for Media</b>		
Media Outreach	The Working Group for Media will focus on broad outreach	Opening

	<p>through various media, to foster a conducive climate for all who live, work and play in Singapore to interact and integrate.</p> <p>Integration content will be incorporated in print specials in the main vernacular languages. The Working Group for Media is supporting <i>Crossroads</i>, a segment in Lianhe Zaobao that aims to help integrate Chinese immigrants into Singapore society with news and issues of concern.</p> <p>The Working Group for Media and Tabla! are working together on regular articles that feature personalities or highlight interesting friendship/relationships shared between new citizens and locals. A “Do you know?” column provides readers with information on Singapore, such as places of interest and local customs.</p> <p>The Working Group for Media and Channel 8 are also working on a series of current affairs programmes featuring various personalities to share their take on living in Singapore and their interaction with the local community</p> <p>The Working Group for Media is also working with new media such as blogs and Web TV to carry features, video clips and online competitions on social integration.</p>	Hearts
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