

Apr + May 2006

# samudra



**Three Cheers to  
Three Comrades  
on May Day!**



Apr + May 2006

# samudra

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*May Day Photos by NTUC and The Write Stuff Pte Ltd. May Day Award citations and photos on the cover page are taken from "May Day Awards 2006" Booklet, published by NTUC Media Co-operative Ltd.*



# MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS



## Three Cheers to Three Comrades!

Prime Minister Lee Hsein Loong described this year's May Day as "a triple celebration".

"First, May Day, May the first; secondly, NTUC, celebrating 45th anniversary; thirdly, another 45th anniversary, the symbiotic relationship between the NTUC and the PAP," he said to loud cheers from the crowd who had gathered at the Suntec Exhibition Hall.

For SOS and Seacare, this year's May Day had another significant reason to celebrate. At the May Day Dinner also held at the same place the night before, three of our comrades received the Comrade of Labour Award.

"This is beyond my dream. I never thought that one day I would go up on stage and receive a prestigious award such as this from NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Boon Heng," said Mr Bon Sheun Ping.

Mr Bon's sentiment was also shared by Award recipients Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar and Mr Nazarudin Nandok who were all smiles throughout the night. Their citations can be found on pages 5 to 7 in this issue of Samudra.

"Our three deserving comrades were very active in whipping support for the fledgling SOS at a very crucial time in its history and has been actively associated with the SOS ever since. As elected officials of the SOS, they take upon themselves the task of trying to help their fellow seamen in whatever way they can," Mr Leow Ching Chuan, SOS General Secretary told Samudra.

They have laboured hard for both SOS and Seacare and have made significant contributions to better the life of the members. This is a proud moment for all of us. We truly celebrate with them!"

"This is beyond my dream. I never thought that one day I would go up on stage and receive a prestigious award such as this from NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Boon Heng," said Mr Bon Sheun Ping.

# We Together!



The celebration continued at the May Day Rally. PM Lee paid tribute to all who gathered together and pulled Singapore through a rough patch.

"We are a resilient people. We've bounced back because we have adapted to change, we've seized new opportunities and when we have had to adapt, when we have to restructure, retrench, we've bitten the bullet, moved ahead and therefore gone through the rough patch to come through into the high winds and the sunshine again," PM Lee said.

On the Progress Package which benefited 2.1 million Singaporeans, PM Lee commented:

"It's one of the things which makes me feel good, that I can balance my books in the government and at the same time give every citizen a share in the growth of the nation."

"We've got something good in Singapore. We must work together, continue to make this happen. Then together we will have a brighter future. Together we will be able to stay together and move ahead."

"We are a resilient people. We've bounced back because we have adapted to change, we've seized new opportunities and when we have had to adapt, when we have to restructure, retrench, we've bitten the bullet, moved ahead and therefore gone through the rough patch to come through into the high winds and the sunshine again," PM Lee said.



## More Jobs and Better Jobs!



In his May Day speech, NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Boon Heng reiterated that the focus of NTUC is still on jobs – more jobs and better jobs.

"We will help our low-wage workers earn more by pushing for more jobs in more sectors to be re-designed under the Job Re-creation Programme. We will not let up on training and retraining," he stressed.

"We have done much in the past 45 years. There is yet much more to be achieved! But NTUC is on the move. We are the only union movement in the world where union membership is rising every year. We have 460,000 members. We aim to reach 1 million in membership by 2015."

Together, we can strive for a brighter future for all so there will be many happy May Days to celebrate!

# COMRADE OF LABOUR AWARD CITATIONS

## COMRADE BON SHEUN PING



Comrade Bon Sheun Ping joined the Singapore Organisation of Seamen in 1974 when the organisation was still in its infancy. Two years later, he was elected to the Executive Committee and has served in various capacities ever since. For 15 years, he held the position of Assistant Treasurer and was elected Vice-President in 1998, a position he still holds.

He was subsequently appointed to the Board of Trustees of Seacare Co-operative Limited in 1995, and to the Board of Directors of Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd in 2000. Comrade Bon has also been appointed an Alternate Member of the National Trades Union Congress's Workplace Health and Safety Committee for the 2003-2007 term.

In recognition of his contributions to Singapore Organisation of Seamen and fellow workers, the National Trades Union Congress is pleased to present the Comrade of Labour Award to Bon Sheun Ping.



# COMRADE OF LABOUR

COMRADE

## MOHAMAD BIN ABU BAKAR



Comrade Mohamad Bin Abu Bakar has been a Member of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen since 1978. In 1991, he was elected to the Executive Committee in which he serves as the Assistant Secretary, till today.

A seaman himself, Comrade Mohamad takes a strong interest in the welfare of his fellow seamen who are working at sea or who are adapting to shore work. He was appointed to the Board of Directors of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd in 2000 and is also a member on the National Trades Union Congress's Community Development Committee for the 2003-2007 term.

In recognition of his contributions to Singapore Organisation of Seamen and fellow workers, the National Trades Union Congress is pleased to present the Comrade of Labour Award to Mohamad Bin Abu Bakar.



# AWARD CITATIONS

COMRADE

## NAZARUDIN BIN NANDOK



Comrade Nazarudin Bin Nandok joined the Singapore Organisation of Seamen in 1973, and became a union activist on board the various ships he served. In 1991, he was elected to the Executive Committee and has been its Assistant Secretary for the past 12 years.

Union activists such as Comrade Nazarudin play an important role in promoting the Union to crew on board ships all over the world. Through his tireless efforts, he has garnered the seamen's support and goodwill for the Union.

In 1997, he was appointed to the Board of Directors of Seacare Co-operative Limited and to the Board of Directors of Seacare Foundation Pte Ltd in 2002. He is also an Alternate

Member of the National Trades Union Congress's Community Development Committee for the 2003-2007 term.

In recognition of his contributions to Singapore Organisation of Seamen and fellow workers, the National Trades Union Congress is pleased to present the Comrade of Labour Award to Nazarudin Bin Nandok.





## SOS AND SEACARE

# *Celebrate* PAP WIN

The labour movement was in a jubilant mood on Polling Day on 6 May 2006. The votes were cast and the verdict pointed to a strong mandate for the People's Action Party and the Labour Members of Parliament (MP).

To celebrate the good news, SOS and Seacare took a two-page congratulatory message in NTUC News and declared:

*"Since 1959, the labour movement has put 57 voices into the Singapore Parliament. We congratulate all the labour leaders who have been elected as Members of Parliament in the General Election!"*

The two-page spread featured all the elated faces of the Labour MPs including NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Boon Heng, Deputy Secretary General Mr Lim Swee Say, SOS Advisor Mr Arthur Fong, Singapore National Cooperative Federation Chairman Mr Seah Kian Peng and more.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong expressed his delight: "Fellow Singaporeans, the voters have decided. I'm very happy that the PAP has been returned to government. Overall, our percentage is 66.6 per cent, exactly two-thirds. And it's slightly higher than the percentage we scored in 1997.

So I'd like to thank all Singaporeans for giving my team and me this very strong mandate. The support has come from all communities across all races. And we will do our best to serve you, work with you, so that we can achieve our vision for Singapore.

Singaporeans have strongly supported what my Government is doing and our plans for the future. We will now implement the programmes on our manifesto to create opportunities for all, to provide an outstanding education for our young people, to get every Singaporean to play a role, improve our health-care system and attend to elderly and poor citizens.

We have a lot to do and we are starting now."



*"Fellow Singaporeans, the voters have decided. I'm very happy that the PAP has been returned to government. Overall, our percentage is 66.6 per cent, exactly two-thirds. And it's slightly higher than the percentage we scored in 1997."*





# General Election 2006 Congratulations

Since 1959, the labour movement has put 57 voices into the Singapore Parliament. We congratulate all the labour leaders who have been elected as Members of Parliament in the recent General Election.



**Lim Boon Hong**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Mahi Bawa Tan**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Lim Swee Say**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Matthias Yee Chih**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Chuan Soo Sen**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Yu Poo Yee Shoon**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Zairul Abidin Rashid**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Hong Chee How**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Koo Rui Kee**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Howell Dudge**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Ong Ah Heng**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Seng Han Thong**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Hudaib Yacobi**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Neo Guat Kwang**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Berni Ng**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Cynthia Pua**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Charles Chong**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Arthur Fong Jun**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Josephine Teo**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Seah Kian Peng**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon



**Teo Ser Luck**  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon  
Member of Parliament for Serangoon

The Executive Committee and Members of the Singapore Organisation of Sources  
The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Seng Guan Cooperative Limited and its Group of Companies

**seAcAre**

Seng Guan Holdings Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Real Estate Pte Ltd  
Seng Guan Properties Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Education Pte Ltd  
Seng Guan Maritime World Centre Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Properties Pte Ltd  
Seng Guan Commercial Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Club Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Welfare Pte Ltd  
Seng Guan Trading Pte Ltd - Seng Guan Plaza Pte Ltd - Seng Guan North Pte Ltd - Seng Guan South Pte Ltd  
Seng Guan International Pte Ltd - Seng Guan International (Malaysia) Pte Ltd - Seng Guan International (India) Pte Ltd

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2006: 6754 6199 www.seacare.org.sg www.seacare.org.sg

PM Lee pointed out that the new leadership team is in place to see Singapore through the next 15 to 20 years. Singapore needs a first-class team to cope with the rapid changes and the unpredictable surprises which are bound to come.

A few days before Polling Day, PM Lee had said at the May Day Rally that Singaporeans have a choice. He said:

“Choose to create more jobs tomorrow even if we must let go of some existing jobs today.

Choose to have a safe home with a clean government.

Choose a strong partnership between government, unions, workers and the companies who are the engines for jobs.

Choose to ride with the global tide, and leave no one behind. Stay together, move ahead.

And of course choose the party that stands for happiness, prosperity and progress, or actually we should just say ‘Prosperity And Progress’ - PAP. Because the PAP and the NTUC know what is at stake for us, for our people, for our children.”

Indeed, Singaporeans made a decisive choice on 6 May 2006. We chose to reinforce the symbiotic relationship between PAP and NTUC. We chose Prosperity And Progress.

# BENCHMARK GOES UP!

By 2007, the wages of Able Seamen working onboard FOC ships covered by ITF-SMOU/SOS-SMEF TCC Agreement will receive US\$1,550, up from US\$1,400.

"This marked a 10.7% wage increase. We are indeed pleased," said Mr Kam Soon Huat, SOS Executive Secretary, at the signing of the Agreement on 18 May 2006.

Compensation for loss of life has also increased – by a substantial 37.5%. By 2007, the compensation will increase from the current US\$60,000 to US\$82,500. In the event of a seafarer's demise, each child, subject to a maximum of four, under the age of 21 will receive US\$16,500, up from US\$15,000.

That is not all. The Agreement, which takes effect from 1 January 2006 to December 2007, also spelled out an increase in the compensation for disability. Over two years starting from this year, the compensation will jump from US\$60,000 to US\$78,750 before hitting US\$82,500 in 2007.



Signing the Agreement were

- International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Head Agreements Unit, Mr Branko Krznaric
- Singapore Maritime Employers' Federation (SMEF) Chairman, Captain Chong Chee Eng and Secretary Mr Victor Lim
- Singapore Maritime Officers Union (SMOU) Assistant General Secretary, Mr Larry Chan and IR Consultant, Mr Kumaran Kunjoo
- SOS Executive Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat and Vice President Mr Mohamad Idris Mohamad Ibrahim.

## IBF SAY YES TO 10% WAGE INC

It is one good news after another. The International Bargaining Forum (IBF) members concluded an agreement with SOS and SMOU that resulted in seafarers working onboard FOC ships getting a 10% wage increase.

The ITF-SMOU/SOS IBF TCC Model (Foreign Flag Vessels) Seafarers' Agreement was signed on 18 May 2006. Made effective

from 1 January 2006 to December 2007, the Agreement specified that wages will be increased by about 5% in 2006 and another 5% in 2007.

Compensation for loss of life remained at US\$75,000 and another US\$15,000 for each dependent child under 21 years of age up to a maximum of four children. The maximum compensation for disability for

# ITF SEAFARERS' SECTION COMMITTEE MEETS IN HONG KONG

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Seafarers' Section Committee Meeting was held from 23 to 24 May in Hong Kong. SOS Executive Secretary, Mr Kam Soon Huat represented SOS at the meeting.

Apart from the adoption of the Provisional Agenda, there was also an update on ILO development, criminalisation and preparation for congress.

Regardless of nationality or the flag of

their ship, the ITF has always worked to improve conditions for seafarers and to ensure adequate regulation of the shipping industry to protect their interests and rights. Henceforth, taking priority at this meeting were broader regional issues and political campaigns, as well as matters directly concerning seafarers' well-being.

In particular, developments of maritime safety were discussed and preparation was made for the FPC-SG and FPC related

developments. Matters concerning women seafarers were also brought up. These issues had to be addressed for the necessary formation of more up-to-date policies in time to come.

The ITF has been helping seafarers since 1896 and today represents the interests of seafarers worldwide, of whom more than 600,000 are members of ITF-affiliated unions.

## CREASE

AB and below stayed at US\$75,000.

Signing the Agreement were ITF Head Agreements Unit, Mr Branko Krznaric; SMOU Assistant General Secretary, Mr Larry Chan and IR Consultant, Mr Kumaran Kunjoo; SOS Executive Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat and Vice President Mr Mohamad Idris Mohamad Ibrahim.





CREW MEMBERS

# GRATEFUL FOR SOS' CONCERN



Bringing each seafarer a jockey cap and umbrella was only a small token of gift, but little did SOS IR Officer Mr Mohamad Idris expect to receive fervent thanks and appreciation for the gesture.

Named Mandarin Glory, the vessel was anchored at the Eastern Bunkering Anchorage for 12 hours before heading off for Australia. Going onboard the Bulk Carrier on 10 April 2006, Mr Mohamad Idris was pleased to note the response and reactions of the crew upon being told of their vessel being covered under the Collective Bargaining Agreement with SOS.

The Chinese crew consisting of 16 ratings were warm in their welcome to Mr Mohamad Idris, and in fact, had looked forward to Union officials coming on such visitations regularly. Some used the opportunity to clarify their doubts regarding Union members' welfare and entitlements.

# SOS ASSISTS UKRAINIAN SEAFARERS IN OBTAINING WAGES

The container vessel, Tiger Spirit (Limassol), with a crew of nine officers and 17 ratings, had docked at Singapore's port on 24 April 2006. Hailing mostly from Ukraine, there were also one other member from Russia and another from Romania amongst the crew members.

Two of the crew members, Mr Yakushev Ruslan and Mr Sandulav Kostyantyn, had first approached SOS when the vessel anchored in Singapore. They submitted a letter to SOS regarding their unpaid wages. The vessel was bound for Calcutta, India, and the vessel departed Singapore on that same day.

SOS immediately swung into action and referred the matter to the International Transport Federation (ITF) London. An ITF Inspector in Calcutta boarded the vessel upon its arrival. The wages were then calculated and back-dated accordingly, however, due to time constraint, the ship-owner requested that the back-dated wages, which amounted to USD 8,548.56 be paid in Singapore. The vessel had been scheduled to make a two-day stopover in Singapore.

When it anchored at the Eastern Working Anchorage on 25 May 2006, SOS IR Officer Mr Mohamad Idris went on board the container vessel to witness the payment of the back-dated wages to the two affected seafarers.

Mr Yakushev had received USD 5,247.74 while Mr Sandulav's payment amounted to USD 3,300.82; following which both members were repatriated to Ukraine.

"SOS would also like to urge any members who encounter any difficulties, to approach the union, and we will do our best to render our assistance," Mr Mohamad Idris reiterated.





## SOS CLAIMS SLF GIFT PLUS FOR MEMBER

SOS foreign member Mr Myo Thwin suffered a fatal fall on 21 July 2005 while working on board MV Glacier of Eastwind Shimanagement Pte Ltd. He had slipped and fell on his back on the vessel. He left behind his 47-year-old wife, a 20-year-old son and 15-year-old daughter.

Upon receiving news of his demise, SOS made a claim on behalf of the member's family from the SLF Gift Plus. On 24 April 2006, Mr Daniel Tan, SOS Industrial Relations Executive, personally went to Yangon, Myanmar, and presented a sum of S\$4,500 to the family of the deceased.

Mr Tan also conveyed the Union's deepest condolences to the family of Mr Myo Thwin. Madam Daw Hla Nyunt, wife of Mr Myo Thwin, expressed her immense gratitude to the SOS on behalf of her family.

"This is a small gesture on our part, but we hope the payment will be of help to the family," said Mr Tan.

*"This is a small gesture on our part,  
but we hope the payment will be of  
help to the family," said Mr Tan.*





# THE WRITE APPROACH



The development of the email system serves to ease our lives and realise efficiency. But some have unwittingly complicated the process by peppering emails with many "pollutants". From committing Syntax errors such as lack of punctuation to the mechanics of writing styles, email-writing is really a multi-disciplinary effort that extends beyond the "Hi" and "Bye".

And as the professional trainer Mr Tham Kin Foon pointed out, this not only results in a poorly communicated message, but reflects unfavourably on the sender as well. Such email etiquette can achieve optimum results when performing the emailing function. From informal slangs or industrial jargons to choosing the right words and constructing grammatical sentences, the way we write our email can determine the effectiveness of the message, no matter how trivial it may seem.



Mr Tham was the Divisional Director of the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) before retiring in December 2003. He was invited to conduct a course for SOS/Seacare staff and Exco on adopting the right approach in writing emails. The course included practical exercises on drafting suitable emails which are relevant in today's business climate.

The 28 Exco and staff sat through the evening course held on 13 April 2006 and were awarded a Certificate of Achievement at the end it.

# CITI – ACCREDITED TRAINING PROVIDER OF MOM

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has stopped offering training courses through their Occupational, Safety and Health (OSH) Training and Promotion Centre and has phased out their training function to Accredited Training Providers (ATP). The courses will continue to be administered by the Ministry under their ATP certification scheme.

One of the ATPs identified by MOM is the Construction Industry Training Institute (CITI). At CITI, various approved safety related courses such as Building Construction Supervisors Safety Course, Safety Co-ordinators Training Course, Supervision of Metal Scaffold Erection and Formwork Safety Course for Supervisors are conducted.

The change in MOM's policy is aligned to the new OSH framework which called for greater ownership of safety outcome

from the industry. The introduction of the ATP scheme back in 1997 has enabled the industry to build up its capacity and capabilities to provide the training service, and respond to the training needs of the industry.

The Ministry will continue to focus on its role as a regulator to provide strategic directions and ensure quality delivery of OSH training in the industry.

SOS Exco has also approved and effected the revision to our Schedule 3, for all courses conducted from April 2006 onwards. The revised schedules 2 and 3 can be found in the last issue of Samudra.

The SOS Training and Skills Development Committee will continue to work closely with all ATPs in providing more options for our members who are interested in the OSH courses.



## SAFETY CO-ORDINATORS TRAINING COURSE

### Course Contents

- Framework of Safety Legislations
- Role and Duties of Safety Co-ordinator
- Fundamentals of Behavioural-based Safety
- Communication in Safety
- Motivation in Safety
- Safety Management System I
- Safety Management System II
- Safety Audit and Safety Review
- Accident Investigation Techniques and Case Studies
- Hazards Identification and Analysis

### Objective

To familiarise participants with the safety legislations, safety management system, accident investigation techniques, identification and analysis of hazards

**Construction Industry Training Institute (CITI)**

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Website: [www.bca.gov.sg/citi](http://www.bca.gov.sg/citi)



# SOS SPONSORED COURSES OPENED DOORS TO JOBS

By 6.30 in the evening, while most people have knocked off from a day's work and are looking forward to a warm meal of dinner at home, there are some others who have just started on their next "shift"; a second shift which normally ends only after 10 at night, in the CITI classroom no less.



CITI, which stands for Construction Industry Training Institute, is the Building and Construction Authority's (BCA) training arm and aims to raise the skills level of the construction industry's manpower through training and certification. It is also

where 42-year-old Mr Abdul Kahar Osman has been dropping by regularly for the past one month, for his twice-a-week lessons in the Safety Co-ordinators Training Course.

Following new workplace safety regulations adopted by the Government in collaboration with NTUC, Mr Kahar was spurred to upgrade his skills and knowledge. Effective from 1 March 2006, under the new Workplace Safety and Health Act, safety and health risk management systems and processes are required to be implemented to minimise the risk of accidents.

However, there were some slight hiccups initially. Being on contract basis, Mr Kahar was unable to obtain any financial aid or whatsoever from his company. Not to be deterred, the keen learner went back to SOS for help. Under the Training Grant Benefit, his fees will be covered by the union. "The union has done its best for our members, and if not

for their help, a lot of us will find it difficult to go for skills upgrading."

Mr Kahar should know better. After all, he is no stranger to upgrading and skills training. Since 1998, he has completed the Crane Operator Course, Supervision of Metal Scaffold Erection Course and the Building Construction Supervisors Safety Course, all completed at CITI. In fact, the appreciative man reckons that till date, SOS has generously contributed more than \$2,000 to his "education".

"And each time, these certificates have opened many doors for me. My job scope became more challenging and I was given a salary that commensurate with my qualifications." As with previous experiences, Mr Kahar knows that the certificate will also serve him well. He knows friends who, armed with the certification in this course, were offered jobs with great prospects. Some even went for overseas job-postings.



Conducted by CITI, which is an Accredited Training Provider of Ministry of Manpower, the course requires all to know the laws and documentation at their fingertips. The father of four found it tough at first, but undaunted, he tried reading up before attending class each time, and got his friends who have taken the course before to coach him whenever he runs into difficulties.

As the sole breadwinner, he knows that upgrading himself is the best chance that he will have in giving his family a good life. Besides, this course will further enhance his knowledge and skills in his line of work, and possibly bring more opportunities in future.

"Everyone hopes to get promoted and get a bigger pay packet, but if we don't do anything else other than 'hope', then nothing will change."



# SOS BRINGS CHEER TO AWWA RESIDENTS!



With 38 residents from the Asia Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) Home bundled up the chartered bus, SOS was all set and ready to hit Downtown East for a cheery day of outing!

This May Day was not just to celebrate the firm tripartism enjoyed in Singapore, but to bring good cheer to some 1,500 residents and children from various welfare homes as well. And on 27 May, they were the "guests-of-honour" at the May Day Outing held at Downtown East.

Devoting their Saturday morning to spending time with these residents was something these unionists were more than willing to do. Led by SOS President Mr Tan Jing Bock, the group of six SOS EXCO members and staff were glad to be the day's volunteers who make a difference.

Organised by NTUC and its affiliated unions, the May Day Outing was part of the May Day Celebrations, and was

designated to bring joy to the less privileged and more vulnerable. Above all, they deserved our attention, care and concern.

Over at Downtown East, the elderly folks had their fill at the sumptuous banquet while being entertained by the performances and dances put up. The Guest-of-Honour, Mr Raymond Lim, Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, also distributed red packets to the elderly. The elderly certainly had not lost touch with their love for dancing, for some were accompanied onstage during the finale for a smashing great time!

It went without saying that the elderly were immensely cheered by the boisterous activities around them, with their gifts of red packets and a goodie bag each. A memorable day for them, with their faces shining brightly as the sun!

# MOMS CAN PARTY TOO!



No children to mind, no meals to prepare; just a day away from the kitchen and chores! It was a great union of the SOS members' wives at the Union Square on 22 April, where some 60 housewives came together for an afternoon of fun and relaxation!

Well-known for its variety of dance displays, the hot spot at Amara Shopping Centre was transformed into a venue for some engaging line-dance performance that Saturday afternoon. At first, they were contented to let the professionals perform, but with some nudging, they were ready to strut their stuff. Moving along to the music, our heroines certainly had no qualms getting into the groove themselves too!

With spirits still running high, the emcee next launched the games segment. It was fun galore, and there was much spontaneous participation from the audience.

At another corner, it was a time for catching up with fellow bosom buddies and newly-made friends, while savouring the rich spread of Hi-Tea buffet.

With 20 lucky draw prizes up for grabs, cheers rang out heartily and it was hard to miss the disappointment when the event drew to a close.

A successful gathering again, and till the next time then!



# MEMBERS CORNER



## IT'S A BOY & IT'S A GIRL!



### *Congratulations*

to Mr and Mrs Onn Hashim and Mr and Mrs Buhari Yateni on the birth of their son and daughter respectively! Both babies were born on 21 April 2006.

## COMING EVENTS



What:  
Durian Trip  
When:  
15 July 2006



What:  
Tombola Nite  
When:  
25 August 2006

## CONDOLENCES

SOS conveys our deepest condolences to the family of Mr Yeo Sin Kuen, who passed away on 22 April 2006.





# Seacare Focus



# CREATING A FUTURE IN THE DIGITAL WORLD - SEACARE EVOLUTION SETS UP NEW JV

The digital age is changing the way we live, work and play; and refining the way information is organised and classified. Business and technology-savvy Seacare Evolution Pte Ltd thus seizes the opportunity and is stepping up to carve a niche for a brand new Seacare business to thrive and grow in the digital world.

On 5 May 2006, the company entered a joint venture agreement with Vaughn International Ltd and ELO Digital Office (Asia) Pte Ltd to incorporate Seacare Digital Office Pte Ltd. Seacare Evolution holds 41% of the shares, while Vaughn International Ltd and ELO Digital Office (Asia) Pte Ltd have 39% and 20% respectively.

Seacare Digital Office Pte Ltd offers quality and tested digital archiving, documentation management and workflow solutions ranging from an entry-level solution for SMBs (ELOoffice) to the highly scalable modular client/server systems for large corporations (ELOprofessional and ELOenterprise). Potential clients include public authorities, tax consultants, lawyers, auditors, the trade sector, industry, service providers, administration, banks, insurance companies, publishing houses and more.

"Any company that uses paper, video clips, images are our potential customer," asserts Mr Koh Tak Yang, Director, Seacare Evolution Pte Ltd.

Indeed, accumulating records and documents is an inevitable part of running a business. Paperwork turns into stacks and stacks of folders taking up increasing amount of space. Most companies are trying to archive by saving the thousands of papers in cds or other digital forms.

"But retrieving the document or electronic files, emails and attachments and video clips and images at the shortest time can pose a big headache," points out Mr Koh. The integrated sounds-like search of Seacare Digital Office solutions enable documents to be found in spite of typing errors and names being incorrectly spelt (e.g. Thompson/Tompson). The results of search requests already carried out are stored and can quickly be called up again from a list when requests are made. The existing full text search engine has also been optimised.

"On top of that, a good software would need to administer security so as to prevent unauthorized access or modification of confidential information. That's where Seacare Digital Office comes in," points out Mr Koh. The solutions that Seacare Digital Office presents come equipped with powerful security features like password, access rights, 128 bit encryption, and digital signature. And replication and backup functions can be set to meet the specific needs for server-to-server



replication and backup, at any predefined time, for any predefined folders.

Mr Koh adds: "And we can configure solutions that fit our customers' actual budget and needs, from basic installation to comprehensive enterprise solutions."

Another cutting edge advantage is that Seacare Digital Office adopts user-friendly solutions that can also be easily integrated with Microsoft Office, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Exchange, ERP, (SAP, Navision, BaaN, etc), most CAD systems, DICOM (Digital Imaging and Communication in Medical) Standard Radiology machines, CRM, even tailor-made applications, any hardware (AS 400, Mainframe, heavy duty scanners, duplex or flatbed scanners, jukeboxes, fax and more.

*"All of us are committed to providing quality Information Technology solutions for companies and organisations to satisfy our customers' needs with efficient integrated high-tech solutions,"*



# COMPANY



*mitted to create high  
technology solutions to  
isations. We endeavor  
s by giving them most  
h technology business*



The healthcare industry for one will find Seacare Digital Office assistance most beneficial. The ELO Medical enables radiology data to be archived and displayed. ELO Medical also allows the automated management of patient data from archiving to Reminder Items. The management of CAD data with ELOoffice also makes Seacare Digital Office a cut above the rest for the CAD user community.

One basic strategy Seacare Evolution has adopted to put the new business in good stead is to find reputable companies as partners.

ELO Digital Office (SEA) is the sole distributor in Asia of products manufactured by ELO Digital Office GmbH, Germany which is one of Europe's leading vendors of storage and archiving systems, and suppliers of office products. ELO (Electronic Leitz Organizer) products are being used increasingly in large groups in many different sectors, thanks to their high performance potential. Among the clients are companies such as ABN Amro, The National Bank of Greece, Citibank, Commerzbank, Degussa Bank, Airbus, Lufthansa, MAN, ALSTOM, Debitel, BMW, EADS, DaimlerChrysler, Zott, Südzucker AG, BDI, DRK, BKK and state and federal authorities.



**At the signing ceremony:** Seacare Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan, Director Mr Lee Van Chong and General Manager Mr Koh Tak Yang. Country Director Ms Soeriana Iskandar and Director Mr Patrick Ng, represented Vaughn International Pte Ltd; while CEO Mr Karl Heinz Mosbach of ELO Digital Office GmbH and CEO Denny Malingkas from ELO Digital Office Asia were present.

Recently, the CEBIT AUSTRALIA 2006, Australasia's biggest information communications and technology event, presented the CeBIT Award for the Best Product/ Service for Business Processes to ELO for their document management and archiving solutions. The accolade speaks volume of the industry's approval of ELO product.

Set up in 1991, Vaughn International Pte Ltd has been a competent provider of Print and Mail Services in South East Asia. Whilst being a specialist in the area of Print and Mail, Vaughn maintains strategic alliances across Asia with a wide range of companies in order to help meet the needs of customers across the whole spectrum of data and information transfer. These partners include SRING Global Mailing, Secura Technologies (H.K) Limited and Uken Resources Sdn. Bhd.

"All of us are committed to create high quality Information Technology solutions to companies and organisations. We endeavor to satisfy our customers by giving them most efficient integrated high technology business solutions," Mr Koh assures.





# SEACARE ENVIRONMENTAL DIVERSIFIES A

The time is ripe and Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd is ready to forage into greener pasture

On 2 May 2006, Seacare Environmental established a Landscape Division as part of its div  
Landscape Division has already seen a steady stream of job offers, as well as some very s

“Providing cleaning services remains our core business for now, but being able to value-add is fundamental to us. Offering a wider range of services to customers will certainly make us even more competitive.” Mr Abdul Kader, General Manager of Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd.

With the setting up of a new Landscape Division, Seacare Environmental has engaged a very experienced Manager to head this new wing – Mr Firos Angullia.

To Mr Firos, landscaping forms a neglected but important aspect of any surrounding. Finding out what the client wants and having a working knowledge of horticulture at fingertips are the must-do and must-have. He quipped: “Our Landscape Division will be about injecting life to a place.”



*“Providing cleaning services remains our core business for now, but being*



*able to value-add is fundamental to us. Offering a wider range of services to customers will certainly make us even more competitive.” Mr Abdul Kader, General Manager of Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd.*

The Seacare Environmental Landscape Division will focus on two major aspects of “Landscaping”; one, maintenance of landscape and two, new projects. Specifically, new projects can include anything from removal of old plants and planting new ones, turf management like the recent re-turfing of the Pandan Valley Condominium, upgrading of



# LAND GOES GREEN

es.

ersification plans. Barely into its first month of operation, the satisfied clients.



landscapes, even right down to tree pruning of plants and shrubs. "Be it private grounds like condominiums or public places like churches or commercial buildings and malls, you can be assured they will be in good hands," Mr Firos said.

The Landscape Division has more exciting plans in the pipeline. By now, they are looking into expanding the landscape business into supply and rental of potted plants for events and offices. And this means a possibility of acquiring and running their very own Seacare nursery too.

Mr Firos explained, "In the long run, this will translate into better pricing and thus, cost savings for our clients. More importantly, we will also be able to ensure and maintain the quality of our plants and shrubs. Both components will piece together to be a win-win situation for all."

With these plans mapped out, Seacare Environmental will also look into better utilising their manpower in time to come. The far-sighted management team even see the necessity of training their cleaning personnel to acquire new skills in landscaping, and are ready to advocate that.

"The synergy between Seacare Environmental's cleaning services and the new landscaping facility will bring about an enhanced and improved work process. Tapping on each others' network and contacts is not only ideal, the sharing of resources and equipment will definitely result in better economies of scales," said Mr Kader.

"Our long-term vision is to become a full-fledge service provider – cleaning, landscaping, to possibly even waste management; and we are confident of bringing both quantity and quality to all households, private and public places."

*"The synergy between Seacare Environmental's cleaning services and the new landscaping facility will bring about an enhanced and improved work process. Tapping on each others' network and contacts is not only ideal, the sharing of resources and equipment will definitely result in better economies of scales," said Mr Kader.*



# THE 'DOCTOR' IN SEACARE ENVIRONMENTAL STAYS ROOTED



Ask Mr Firos Angullia, the new Manager of the Landscape Division of Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd, about landscaping and his eyes would brighten up.

His wife can rest assure, for here is a man who only chats up plants. His interest and passion in the landscape industry is so strong, he has no qualms admitting he talks to plants. "Sure, 'hanging out' with my plants makes me feel at ease and gives me an uplifting boost," said the father of three.

This is also a man who initially regretted his decision to make landscaping his livelihood. Hot under the sun, cold and wet in the rain; but all that change upon accomplishing his first job for a client. "The sense of satisfaction is beyond words," he reminisced. But the down-to-earth man also remembered that assignment as one that imparted soft skills to him.

"I learnt how to humble myself and going all out to satisfy the demands of the client. Some can be really demanding, others have quirky requests, but I've learnt to accommodate their requirements or provide alternatives if something cannot be done. Customers will not come back if they feel you haven't done your best for them."

He is all familiar with the 'softscape' and 'hardscape' that makes up the 'landscape'. In truth, "Dr Plant" is able to diagnose illnesses or problems that plague his plants with just a look. Armed with his trusty secateurs measuring tape and digital camera, he is ready to conquer the pests and fungus.

From nitty-gritty details like soil type, temperature or terrain knowledge to natural conditions such as the plants' access to sunlight, he also deems it necessary to talk to his clients to clarify all doubts before embarking on the job. In fact, it has become Mr Firos' second nature to ensure that all conditions are taken care of in any type of landscape.

Many times, instead of washing his hands off things and leaving all to his workers, he is there to get his hands dirty and personally oversee the process. Perhaps that explains why his favourite part of a plant is its roots, which nourish the plant with its intake of water and nutrients.

Likening himself to the roots of a plant, he pushes himself to be the driving force behind the growth and progress of anything he does, be it a project or playing his role in an organisation. "The roots are where the heart is. Without proper roots, there can hardly be proper growth."

When asked about the no-frills, fuss-free artificial plants, Mr Firos' reaction was one of incredulous. "Like the name suggests, 'artificial' – no feel, no life. Nothing beats the real thing!"

Some people joked, "A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill, except for learning how to grow in rows"; this man with green fingers has an unmatched zest and a knack that seems able to even make weeds turn into desirable growth. His advice? Probably his pet phrase, "No short cuts, with lots of patience and loving care!"

*"I learnt how to humble myself and going all out to satisfy the demands of the client. Some can be really demanding, others have quirky requests, but I've learnt to accommodate their requirements or provide alternatives if something cannot be done. Customers will not come back if they feel you haven't done your best for them."*



## MR MODEL WORKER, MR CHNG

Mr Chng Peng Seng was all smiles and could hardly hide his excitement at having the honour of receiving the Model Workers Award from Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong. Sharing his joy were two of his grandchildren who were present at the NTUC Auditorium to witness their 'gong-gong' going on stage to receive the award.



For someone who takes on this job "to kill time", Mr Chng certainly does it with much pride and joy. A cleaner with Seacare Environmental for the past four years, he is part of the team who ensures the Seacare Building remains spick and span at all times. The humble grandfather, however, is quick to play down his achievement.

"I have good bosses here who make work a great pleasure. In fact, I'm grateful to Seacare for the nomination. To me, I'm just doing my job, nothing to rave about," said the 73-year old. Mr Chng is in such a good physical shape that he is up even before the break of dawn at 3am, goes for his jog and reports for work at 6 every morning.



General Manager of Seacare Environmental, Mr Abdul Kader has only praises to sing of Mr Chng. "He is very conscientious in his work, and has the right attitude in all that he does. He is a model worker who possesses all the right qualities. We are proud to have him in our Seacare team."

This year's May Day Model Workers Award 2006 was held in collaboration with the Job Re-creation Programme (JRP) to give recognition to the low income and low skill workers who possess positive attitude and had made the extra efforts to take on new and redesigned jobs. All nominees had to pass through a stringent set of checklist of their attitudes and capabilities, such as having a high degree of dedication to service. To this group of awardees who have shown exemplary performance

and conduct, they are role models in their own right.

The recipients were rewarded with an incentive trip to Vietnam from 22 to 26 May 2006. Mr Chng was more than thrilled about going on the trip. He had longed to tour Vietnam previously, but he didn't want to travel alone. "Now I get to travel with 80 other people!" he said.



# "I AM PERSONALLY EFFECTIVE!"

Seacare Manpower fully understands the importance of maintaining good morale, focused worklife and organisational productivity thus they appreciate the need for their recruited workers to be sufficiently motivated, focused and confident, who are able to achieve both personal and professional goals.



"Seacare Manpower is not just about recruiting and matching staff to jobs. We want our workers to value-add and be quality workers. That is why we ran a course on **Personal Effectiveness and Achievement**, to better equip them for their respective roles in their work environment."

Mr Lee Van Chong, Chairman of Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd, explained, "Seacare Manpower is not just about recruiting and matching staff to jobs. We want our workers to value-add and be quality workers. That is why we ran a course on **Personal Effectiveness and Achievement**, to better equip them for their respective roles in their work environment."



Held during the month of May and June 2006, this first run of the Personal Effectiveness and Achievement Course aimed to empower the participants through communication & stress management, team building and personal effectiveness, amongst many others. And Seacare Manpower has plans to conduct this course on a long-term basis.

Absolutely at no cost for each participant, Seacare Manpower engaged a highly qualified professional to conduct this course. The trainer, Mr Ernest Chen, is a prolific speaker and author

with immense experience. An adjunct lecturer at the Export Institute of Singapore, he speaks regularly at corporations and has conducted numerous seminars and courses in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

Over the two days, Mr Chen provided practical and hands-on guidance on enhancing personal and group effectiveness; and improving performance through more effective communication and stress management.

Through a series of questions and sharing, attendees went through a journey of self-discovery and set goals for themselves. Teambuilding sessions helped many to work through resolving conflicts and improve interpersonal relationships. Communication skills were put to the test as trainees interacted and attempted to listen to one another. A concluding session on how to manage stress at work helped participants to de-stress.





“We believe these courses will not only help them become better at managing their time or stress level, the skills and knowledge they gained will make them become better employees too. We have conducted many of such enhancement courses, and are definitely looking out for more opportunities to enrich our workers. In fact, plans for the July course are already underway,” said Ms Sulena Supaat, Manager of Seacare Manpower.

Indeed, the response for this course was overwhelming. Nearly all of the seven classes were fully booked with more than 30 participants each class. The attendees of this two-day course over the weekend were contract workers of Seacare Manpower serving the schools, most of whom were admin support staff. They were excited at what they had learnt and remarked that they were eager to apply their newly acquired skills at work. And Ms Sulena has confirmed Seacare Manpower’s plans to continue the course on a long-term basis. For starters, the training will be extended to all workers who are interested. They should have completed at least three months of service.



Mr Chen’s engaging and energetic appeal ensured that participants would enjoy all his sessions. With the myriad of group activities, discussions and games, there wasn’t a dull moment during the learning process.

**“I am grateful to Seacare Manpower for letting us attend the course for free. We learnt a lot about ourselves, others and also had the chance to interact with other school workers. I am looking forward to attending more of such courses in future!”** commented one of the participants.

Mr Lee believes in the holistic approach in developing his staff. Besides looking into the interests of his staff, he is all for developing not just their technical know-how, but their soft skills as well.

**“We believe in empowering our workers in all areas so that they will be at their best. The more self-aware and motivated they are, the more focused and productive they will be, whether it is at work or home.”**





# XINNET CONCLUDES A SUCCESSFUL PILOT RUN OF PROGRAMME

Xinnet Education Centre Pte Ltd recently added another noteworthy accomplishment to its portfolio by successfully conducting a pilot run of the Bilingual Preschool Teacher Training Skill Certificate Course in Tianjin, China. The project was a joint effort with the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development of Singapore (ASCD Singapore) in April 2006.

According to Madam Ma Li Li, Head of the preschool group, the four-month programme, conducted with the Tianjin Cathay Future Preschool Group, attracted an overwhelming number of 5,000 job seekers registered with the official Recruitment Centre. An eventual 50 fresh graduates were shortlisted.

The training programme comprised two weeks of English lecture and two weeks of Chinese lecture. The training also included two days of practicum per week at various kindergartens. The practicum stint provided the opportunity for the trainees to put principles and theories into practice.

Madam Ma is highly optimistic about the outcome of the pilot programme. "At the end of the training, we hope to offer placement to some 80% of these trainees within our organisation. I look upon

this run as a self-renewal effort for our group to constantly improve the professional standard of our teachers."

Set up in early 2006, Xinnet Education Centre Pte Ltd is a joint partnership between Seacare Education Pte Ltd and Sino-Sing Pte Ltd. The two organisations had pooled their resources and expertise respectively to venture into the China market with greater confidence and experience. And what resulted was a winning formula. Xinnet has already made its presence known in Tianjin, Shanghai, Harbin and Fuxin.



*"With the experience gained in this pilot run, we endeavour to continue reviewing and fine-tuning our programmes to meet the necessary demands and dynamic requirements, without compromising standards. With the successful placement of these trainees, we know Xinnet is on the right track. We are confident that our programmes will gain recognition and be adopted in other parts of China in time to come."*

~ Ms Chua Lay Mui  
General Manager  
Xinnet Education Centre Pte Ltd



Xinnet Proud to Bond with Locals at Tianjin's Children's Day Celebrations

On 21 May, Ms Chua Lay Mui, General Manager of Xinnet Education Centre Pte Ltd, was specially invited to watch a cultural performance in Tianjin and be a judge of a family talent contest. Organised by the Cathay Future Preschool Group (华夏未来幼教集团), the contest was held at Number Two Kindergarten (华二幼儿园) to promote closer family ties. It was held in conjunction with the Children's Day which falls on 1 June in China.

# WHERE OUR STARS SHINE...

The last performance in May, we had multi-platinum scoring Lin Shu Juan (林淑娟) and the leggy beauty Chen Xiu Wen (陈秀雯) for a great "show-down". This time, we are presenting another pair of highly esteemed singers in a performance not to be missed! This mini-concert to be held at Club@52 promises to be a night of glitter and glamour that will blow you away!

Be mesmerised by the powerful vocals of the pair - "Bao Bei Sisters" (宝贝姐妹), who are the trusted back-up vocalists of yet another charismatic singer, Gao Ling Feng (高凌风). It's their turn to take centre-stage and shine this time! Or how about immersing yourself in the soothing voice of Wang Lei (王雷), the Hokkien crooner hailing from none other than Singapore!

Emceed by an equally sensational performer, Chen Ming Pei (陈明佩), these renowned veteran singers will serenade your favourite songs and leave you with a star-studded night to remember!

Tickets selling fast so don't miss this opportunity! For more enquiries or ticket sales, please contact Club Manager Mr Edmund Phua at 6379 5653.

When: 12 July 2006, 8pm

Where: Club@52, Seacare Building

Whom: Open to public

**seAcAre** club@52  
e-Place Pte Ltd

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# SEACARE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKFORCE OF NATURE; DESIGNER OF LANDSCAPE

Our new Landscape Division is rooted to bring life to your garden through continual innovation and flawless execution.

***“The purpose of landscaping  
is to create harmony and  
ambience within a garden”***

## **Landscape Architecture**

- Landscapes Design & Built
- Mechanical & Engineering (M&E) and Hardscapes

## **Landscape Maintenance**

- Horticulture Maintenance
- Turfing & Grass Cutting
- Tree Felling & Pruning

... and more



**Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd**

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