

## **A New Youth Wing For The Young**

The labour movement to launch Young NTUC to reach out to younger union members

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COME April 30, a new youth wing to attract the young to join the labour movement will be up and running.

Called Young NTUC, the group aims to project a vibrant and modern image through organised activities specially aimed at the young.

To be launched on by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at DXO, the new club formerly occupied by Embassy at the Esplanade, Young NTUC is open to all union members aged 40 and below.

They can look forward to a wide range of activities such as adrenalin-rushing boat racing to the endurance- testing rock climbing.

As a start, Young NTUC will comprise of members from the NTUC Youth Committee, a group of about 40 union leaders aged 35 and below from various unions.

It will be headed by Singapore Teachers' Union Deputy General Secretary Edwin Lye, with Singapore Insurance Employees' Union Assistant Secretary Luke Hee and Chemical Industries Employees' Union Vice-President Mohd Rashed Badarudin as vice-chairs.

Said Mr Lye: "This will offer us the opportunity to project a vibrant and energetic image of the youth in NTUC so as to attract more young people to come forth and join the labour movement."

The immediate challenge is to strengthen its network with the unions and to encourage more unions to establish their own youth chapters. This will "broaden its outreach" and involve more young members in its activities, he said.

### **A long-term objective**

Noting that the challenge to get younger people to join the labour movement is a long-term objective, Young NTUC vice-chair Luke Hee said: "With better management of resources now, we can hopefully organise better activities to attract more younger workers."

The youth committee in Young NTUC, he felt, will still play a significant role as the forefront for youths in the labour movement.

"As we begin to build our bridges across to these youth chapters, the committee will play a major role being the link for future programs and activities for youths," said Mr Hee, adding that this link is vital in facilitating the progress of youths in unions at a national level.

Agreeing, fellow vice-chair Mohd Rashed Badarudin wants to see more participation from different unions. "We need them to give us their support as we can't do it alone. We will need the senior leadership to guide us."

Singapore Interpreters and Translators' Union member Prasakthi Allagoo, 33, is excited about the launch of Young NTUC, and said that the new name allows a broader interpretation – that all youths can join and come under it.

She hopes to see more women joining the group and looks forward to take part in more family-oriented activities to draw in more women members.

"Since our youths are aged under 40, many of our females would be mostly married.

"These women should be informed that union involvement doesn't necessarily mean time away from family. They must be assured that NTUC will cater to family time too," she said.

Expressing her enthusiasm to tackle new challenges in Young NTUC, the feisty lady added: "I look forward to see young leaders emerging, propelled by worthy experienced senior leaders and to see new paths designated for us as youth leaders."

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