

'Total Defence' for the environment

Adapt defence strategy for clean and green movement, says PM

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A Total Defence concept – but for the Clean and Green movement?

That is what Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong would like to see here: the adaptation of Singapore's comprehensive defence strategy – which stresses the role of every citizen in protecting the nation – to the environment.

"Taking care of the environment is something which concerns all of us," he said yesterday. "Singaporeans understand that national defence is critical to our survival and cannot be left to the Singapore Armed Forces alone and each citi-

zen has a part to play.

"Similarly, we cannot succeed in making Singapore clean and green unless we get corporations and individuals to play their part alongside the Government."

Mr Lee was speaking at the launch of the Clean and Green Singapore 2011 campaign. The annual campaign, now in its third year, aims to inspire Singaporeans to care for the environment. The theme this year is Promoting Environmental Ownership, and it was launched with a carnival that includes a bazaar selling eco-friendly products. It is sited in Sengkang where it will remain for two days.

In his speech, PM Lee noted that "Singaporeans are feeling a growing environmental consciousness, especially young Singaporeans".

However, individuals could do more to take ownership of the envi-

ronment, even in "little things in our daily lives", he added. Examples include watching closely the use of water and electricity, keeping Singapore dengue-free and taking care of plants and animals.

Organisations, meanwhile, can also support green initiatives – for instance, electronics company Sony Singapore has adopted Pandan Reservoir.

For its part, the Government "has to set the right conditions", he acknowledged.

It has to provide a conducive living environment and a "good mix of green and blue" across the island with park connectors and clean waters. It also has to maintain environmental standards by curbing pollution with stringent regulations and keeping common spaces clean.

And looking forward, "we have to prepare for the future" by keep-



A tin art display using recycled materials by Japanese artist Akira Takahashi at the launch of the Clean and Green Singapore 2011 campaign yesterday.

ing abreast of new technology that can bring "better, cleaner, more efficient infrastructure and tools", he pledged.

Adding some heft to PM Lee's call for the community to play its part, a \$85,000 fund was set up yes-

terday for individuals and organisations to tap if they launch programmes promoting green causes.

Mr Teo Ser Luck, mayor of North East District, announced a Green Fund for his community development council (CDC). It sup-

plements an existing \$85,000 the National Environment Agency (NEA) gives to support the district's green efforts.

To Mr Teo's knowledge, his is the first such fund at a CDC level.

He said: "Instead of putting money into one big bang event, I'd rather put it into programmes. It's more sustainable."

Schemes that could be funded include anti-littering campaigns or art projects that spread green ideas, he said. Those interested can approach their grassroots bodies, such as residents' committees, for funding.

Some constituencies have already rolled out such initiatives as part of last year's Clean and Green campaign. Yesterday, their efforts were rewarded with awards from the NEA.

Aljunied-Hougang division received a Best Constituency (Ownership) Award. Young people there designed portable ashtrays and approached smokers in coffee shops to use them. They also knocked on doors to encourage residents not to litter.

Hong Kah North division got the same award for its "Cash For Trash" scheme, which lets residents exchange their recyclable waste for groceries.

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