

**OPENING REMARKS BY MR ZAINUDIN NORDIN, MAYOR OF CENTRAL SINGAPORE DISTRICT AND CHAIRMAN OF ONEPEOPLE.SG AT THE OPENING OF THE YOUTH-ORGANISED CAMPTEN CARNIVAL 2007 ON SUNDAY, 30 DECEMBER, 10AM TO 12PM, AT \*SCAPE YOUTH PARK**

Ladies and gentlemen

A very good morning to all.

It is a pleasure to be here with you this morning.

I believe some of you may be wondering what is so special about this youth-organised CampTeen Carnival. What makes it different from other youth-led projects that are a dime and a dozen nowadays? Please bear with me and let me share some background about the Carnival and the youth organisers.

These youth organisers, the young people in the blue CampTeen Carnival T-shirts at the back, are of all races, aged 14 to 16 years old, and come from different secondary schools around Singapore. They had participated in a youth racial harmony ambassadors programme, called CampTeen, that OnePeople.sg had organised just last month from 10 to 13 November at the Outward Bound Singapore on Pulau Ubin.

CampTeen was launched 13 years ago in 1994 by the five self-help groups, namely the Chinese Development Assistance Council, Yayasan Mendaki, Singapore Indian Development Association, The Eurasian Association, Singapore and Association of Muslim Professionals.

OnePeople.sg, which was then known as the Central Singapore Joint Social Service Centre, took over the organisation of CampTeen in 2003.

The objective of CampTeen was to provide a common platform for young people of all races to interact, understand and bond with each other through adventure-based activities, focusing on teamwork, teambuilding and leadership development.

This objective has not changed, but following recent regional and global developments, OnePeople.sg saw a need to review the CampTeen programme to better enhance the cultural competencies of the participants in terms of diversity awareness, mindsets and skills to interact and work well with people of different races and religions and even nationalities. This cultural competency, the mindset and ability to operate comfortably in a multi-cultural environment, is essential to be a World Ready Youth who is able to thrive in a global environment.

Thus, this year's CampTeen participants were given the challenge to put what they have learnt into practice by working hand in hand to organise the CampTeen Carnival to promote multi-culturalism and in support of Singapore's Youth Olympic Games bid.

Many people would have thought that it is mission impossible to organise a carnival of this scale within such a short lead-time of one-and-half months. But these young people have proven otherwise.

Over the past six weeks, they conceptualised what they wanted to do for the CampTeen Carnival and turned their ideas into reality under the facilitation of OnePeople.sg. They formed into five workgroups, each looking at a different theme for the Carnival, namely Sports, Sports for the Other-Abled, Arts, Culture and Heritage. Each workgroup nominated their own leaders, namely two project coordinators and one treasurer. Each workgroup was given a budget, guidance on budget utilisation and

tracking, and entrusted with starting funds of \$500 in cash to help them make the necessary purchases for their preparations.

These young people have demonstrated their creativity, resourcefulness and enterprise by putting this Carnival together under time and budget constraints, and their efforts have garnered the support of partners and sponsors from the public, people and private sectors, such as the National Youth Council, Singapore Totalisator Board, Singapore Disability Sports Council, Sri Warisan Som Said Performing Arts Ltd and Sakae Sushi.

Every workgroup did their own research, trekked the shops seeking the best price for the things they required for their booths, and even roped in their friends to help in the event. For example, the Heritage workgroup obtained the assistance of the Ain Society to decorate their booths and recreate the kampung setting of Singapore in the 19th Century. The Sports workgroup had proposed to run sports competitions and clinics, but were understanding and flexible in changing to sports trivia quiz in the style of Who Wants to be a Millionaire upon learning that there was lack of space to implement their initial ideas due to budget constraints. Not all ideas are workable. The important thing is to be able to accept failure and explore alternatives within the constraints. This is part of the learning process.

I have only highlighted two workgroups, but the other three workgroups for Arts, Culture and Sports for the Other-Abled also have noteworthy instances of creativity and resourcefulness, as you shall discover later as you visit their booths. I am sure they would be happy to share about their learning journeys.

Such a project cannot be done by one person alone. It requires them to learn to work with each other as a cohesive team. I trust that the ultimate goal for many participants is the invaluable time spent with friends of all

racers, working and bonding together to turn their ideas into reality. Such bonding and teamwork embodies the key direction of OnePeople.sg to unite Singaporeans and create platforms for people to come together through multi-racial and multi-interest activities. We may come from different walks of life, but we also share common values, and like the youths have demonstrated through this CampTeen Carnival, need to work hand in hand to achieve common national goals.

Therefore, the journey for you, our young participants, need not end here today. In fact, it is the beginning of a new journey, as I invite you to be the pioneer members of the youth wing that OnePeople.sg will be forming after the CampTeen Carnival. Maintenance of racial harmony takes continuous effort. I strongly urge you to seize this opportunity to discover your talents and harness these talents for the community's and the nation's benefit.

My thanks and gratitude to the partners and sponsors who have contributed to the success of the entire CampTeen 2007, that is the CampTeen: Youth Racial Harmony Ambassadors Programme in November, and the CampTeen Carnival today. In particular, special thanks to the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Embassy of the Russian Federation, Embassy of the Republic of Poland and the Embassy of Japan for their support and participation in the CampTeen Carnival.

My congratulations to the youth organisers and volunteers for a job well done. I must say that you have exceeded my expectations. Please join me in giving yourselves a round of applause.

Thank You.