

# 9 new NMPs to join Parliament

They will replace current NMPs, who will be stepping down from their roles when their terms end on Sept 21

YASMINE YAHYA & ADRIAN LIM

A paralympian gold medalist, a social entrepreneur and a labour economist are among the nine new faces selected as Nominated MPs.

The latest crop of NMPs announced in a statement by Parliament yesterday are:

- Paralympian swimmer Yip Pin Xiu, 26;
- Labour unionist Arasu Duraisamy, 50;
- Sakae Holdings chairman Douglas Foo Peow Yong, 49;
- Singapore Chinese Orchestra executive director Ho Wee San, 49;
- Communication and technology professor Lim Sun Sun, 46;
- Inter-religious non-profit group Roses of Peace founder Abbas Ali Mohamed Irshad, 29;
- Social entrepreneur and Hush TeaBar founder Anthea Ong Lay Theng, 50;
- Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore president Irene Quay Siew Ching, 43; and
- Labour economist and associate professor Walter Edgar Theseira, 40.

The nine will replace the current NMPs, whose terms end on Sept 21 and have stepped down.

The Special Select Committee which chose the NMPs had received 48 proposals.

Leader of the House Grace Fu said yesterday that the nine come with good credentials in their fields, and have keen interest in a broad range of issues.

"As a group, they add to the



(Top row, from left to right) Ms Yip Pin Xiu, Mr Arasu Duraisamy, Mr Douglas Foo.  
(Second row, from left to right) Mr Ho Wee San, Prof Lim Sun Sun, Mr Abbas Ali Mohamed Irshad.  
(Third row, from left to right) Ms Anthea Ong, Ms Irene Quay, Professor Walter Edgar Theseira. TNP FILE PHOTOS

diversity of expertise and experience in the House," said the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth.

Noting that two of the NMPs – Ms Yip and Mr Abbas – are below the age of 30, Ms Fu

expressed confidence that they "will enrich debate by bringing the voices of the youth to the House".

Ms Yip, in fact, will become the youngest NMP in Parliament. Before her, the youngest

NMP was beauty queen and actress Eunice Olsen, who entered Parliament at 27 in 2004.

Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan-Jin, who chaired the Special Select Committee, said in

the statement yesterday that the nine nominees met all constitutional criteria and requirements.

"We are also confident that these passionate and committed individuals will ably represent the views within and across their communities, thus expanding and deepening perspectives shared at parliamentary debates," he added.

The NMP scheme, introduced in 1990, is meant to provide non-partisan views in Parliament. There can be up to nine NMPs in each term, which lasts 2½ years.

SIM Global Education associate lecturer Felix Tan said the new batch of NMPs has big shoes to fill, as the outgoing batch, which includes social entrepreneur Kuik Shiao-Yin and theatre group artistic director Kok Heng Leun, has delivered many eloquent and passionate speeches in Parliament.

"So one would expect that this new batch could raise the bar a little higher and produce similar passionate speeches that affect Singaporeans by and large," he said.

Ms Yip told The Straits Times she was honoured to be the youngest NMP. "I hope to use my experience in the sporting arena as an athlete to make our sporting culture a more vibrant one. I also hope to bring a fresh voice for youths and speak up for equality," she said.

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