

GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION

'Social, community issues increasingly important'

PM announces MCYS and MICA to be restructured; a new ministry to focus on culture, community and youth

NEO CHAI CHIN AND AMIR HUSSAIN
chaichin@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – In one of the Government's biggest moves in recent years, two existing ministries will be restructured and a new ministry will be created to focus on culture, community and youth.

The rationale is to bring social and community issues, as well as the need to effectively engage the public, into sharper focus, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said yesterday in a press statement.

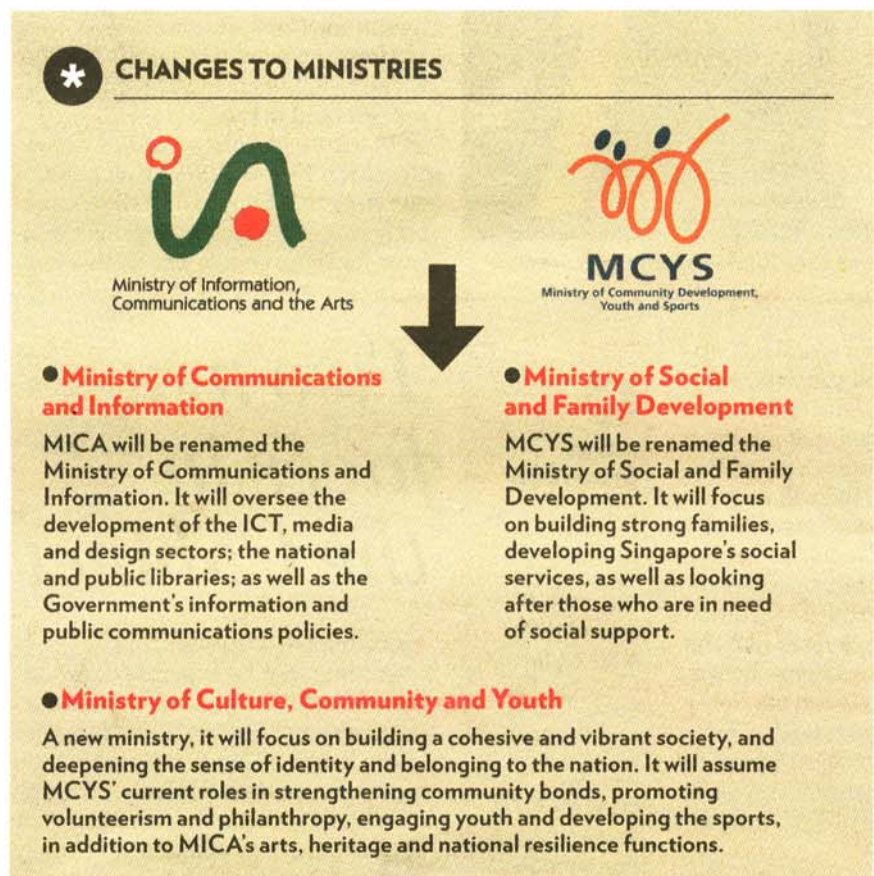
"Singapore is in a new phase of development. Social and community issues are increasingly important in our shared home," Mr Lee added.

From November, the work of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) and the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA) will be overseen by three ministries.

A new ministry, the Ministry for Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) — to be headed by Mr Lawrence Wong, who will be appointed Acting Minister — will take charge of strengthening community bonds and the development of sports, arts and heritage.

The MCYS will be renamed the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), while MICA will be renamed the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI).

Outlining three priorities, Mr Lee said Singapore needs to strengthen its families and enhance its social safety



nets for the needy. The Republic also needs to foster the arts and sports and build social capital through volunteerism and engage youths.

And in the age of social media and swift technological progress, the Government needs to improve public communications and engagement to reach out more effectively to an "increasingly diverse society", said Mr Lee.

In response to media queries, Mr Lee reiterated that all three ministries — the MCCY, MSF and MCI — "will have to break new ground, try fresh approaches and keep up with rapidly changing conditions and needs".

A notable result of the restructuring is the omission of "sports" and "arts" from the names of the new ministries, which have sparked concerns among some in the sports and arts communities whom TODAY spoke to.

But Mr Lee noted: "The name 'Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth' does not identify all these areas explicitly, but that is only to keep the ministry name reasonably concise."

Members of Parliament felt that the onus will also lie with the Minister-designate for the MCCY to ensure sports and the arts remain priorities.

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