

The Online Citizen

HOME

INTERNATIONAL ▾

POLITICS ▾

OPINION ▾

COMMUNITY ▾



LIFESTYLE ▾

LAW & ORDER ▾

FINANCE ▾

VIDEOS

Singapore Democratic Alliance issues elections manifesto ahead of Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC contest

Reduce GST, Tackle inequality, Full withdrawal of CPF, Restrict Foreign Workers Hires



by **The Online Citizen** — 30 June 2020 in **Current Affairs, Politics** 3 min read

0



Source: Wikimedia

It has been announced on 30 June that Singapore Democratic Alliance (SDA) will be **contesting in a three-cornered fight in Pasir Ris-Punggol group representation constituency** (GRC) against People's Voice and People's Action Party.

This will be the first time this GRC will see three parties contesting since the elections in 1992.

The five-member team will consist of Desmond Lim Bak Chuan, Harminder Pal Singh, Abu Mohamed, as well as new faces Kelvin Ong and Kuswadi Atnawi.

One day before Nomination Day on 30 June, SDA released its manifesto titled "A Heart for the People".

The party said the struggles the constituents have shared with them included "the loss of good jobs for young Singaporeans, a spike in the cost of living, the Central Provident Fund (CPF) savings scheme, and the widening inequality gap in Singapore".

The core of its manifesto was crafted on the back of the "pain of (these current) policies" and it proposes solutions tackling these four specific challenges.

1. Reduce Goods and Services Tax (GST) To 3% On Basic Items

SDA foresees an increase in GST will "devastate low- to middle-income Singaporeans who are already grappling with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic".

It is proposing to cut GST for basic items such as food, common household products and other essential items to 3 per cent, and a progressive GST tax system of 3 per cent to 15 per cent, where different groups of goods are pegged to different taxes – basic goods are taxed the least, while luxury items are taxed the most.

SDA has also proposed cutting spending on "extravagant public projects", citing examples such as the upcoming Founders' Memorial and recent Jewel Changi Airport.

"While development of new infrastructure is necessary, expenditure must be exercised with prudence — especially when long-term maintenance costs are taken into account," it said.

SDA proposed "a more stringent set of checks" on the expenditure of such projects. The reductions from these can be afforded to the people instead, the manifesto stated.

2. Tackle Social Inequality

To support youths from disadvantaged families, SDA strives to pump an extra 1 to 5 per cent of the Government's annual Net Investment Returns (NIR) into this demographic group.

The ways in which social inequalities may be reduced for the youths include modern technological equipment, conducive after-school care at dedicated centres near their homes, and having caregivers and tutors to motivate and coach them.

“A fraction of this would go a long way in helping over 100,000 disadvantaged Singaporean families break the poverty cycle,” it said. The NIR are returns from Singapore’s national investments.

3. Full Withdrawal Of CPF Savings At 62

SDA proposes another change to the current CPF system which allows the elderly to withdraw the full sum of their CPF savings as soon as they turn 62, which is the current retirement age, although a portion of their CPF should be reserved in MediSave and MediShield Life for health emergencies.

“It is better to die than to fall ill. This speaks multitudes for the plight of ageing Singaporeans. Not only must (the elderly) toil into their twilight years, they fear being a financial burden to their children,” it stated.

4. Restrict Hiring Of Foreign Workers

To ensure there are not only sufficient jobs for Singaporeans, but compatible jobs for them, the party wants stricter qualifying criteria for the hiring of foreign working professionals by local firms.

Introducing a cap on the number of foreign workers and conducting diligent checks and balances on the educational qualifications of these individuals, to ensure that they have graduated only from universities that are accredited by the Singapore Government, can help alleviate the hiring discrepancy.

It also proposes to tighten the labour auditing process to prevent the abuse of hiring regulations and policies.

Share this:



Tags:  Abu Mohamed Desmond Lim GE 2020 Harminder Pal Singh Kelvin Ong

Kuswadi Atnawi. Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC People's Action Party People's Voice SDA

Singapore Democratic Alliance