

ROUND-UP
OF VIEWSCHILDREN EXPOSED TO SEX
WORKERS IN GEYLANG

I APPLAUD the concerted efforts of officers from the Singapore Police Force, the Central Narcotics Bureau, the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority and Singapore Customs, who nabbed 138 people for vice-related activities.

They were caught as a result of a 13-hour multi-agency operation, which ended on Sunday morning.

In Geylang, there are "blue zones" which are unofficially designated for vice activities.

Unfortunately, these activities have spilled over into areas which house clan associations, societies and religious establishments.

Many of these, such as the Singapore Buddhist Federation and the Buddhist Library, among others, conduct educational classes and offer enrichment courses in the evenings for many people, including youths and children.

It is not conducive for people on their way to attend these programmes, especially young children, to have to walk past sex workers who openly ply their trade in these non-designated areas.

I hope the authorities will be relentless in keeping such illicit activities in check.

MR CHIN KEE THOU

MULTIRACIAL CELEBRATION
SIGN OF GRACIOUS SOCIETY

I JUST received the latest issue of Cohesion, a magazine published by the North West Community Development Council.

It included a photograph of a group of people, including Member of Parliament Ong Ah Heng (Nee Soon Central), celebrating Pongal, an Indian harvest festival.

It was heartwarming to see people of different races coming together to celebrate the festival in a loving and respectful manner – the hallmark of a gracious society.

It also showed the courage of participants to accept others and share their happiness.

Cohesiveness in a society is of paramount importance to a country's development.

It should never be taken for granted and efforts should be made daily to strengthen social ties.

MRS AARADHANA SADASIVAM

ADD MY PAPER FEATURE
TO STOMP IPHONE APP

SOCIAL-NETWORKING site Stomp should be complimented for its free iPhone application, which enables iPhone users to send in photos and videos.

It would be wonderful if Stomp could add a feature to the app which allows iPhone users to read the day's issue of my paper.

MR NELSON QUAH

Five ways to grow interest in art



BY KWAN JIN YAO

I APPLAUD the excellent proposals made by the National Art Gallery as highlighted in the report, "Get sneak preview of art-appreciation centre" (*my paper*, April 9).

They would go a long way towards increasing the level of **art appreciation** in Singapore, especially among students and young people.

At the same time, the efforts also highlight a dearth of concerted movements targeted at heightening awareness of artistic and cultural activities in Singapore.

However, it is not difficult to understand why art appreciation and education are not a priority here, as emphasis is placed on academic pursuits and co-curricular activities in schools.

Parents and students see no need to visit museums and engage in something which has no **tangible** benefits.

To the common man, art appreciation is seen as a niche activity, inaccessible to those with no knowledge of the area.

Hence, in addition to current efforts to reach out to young people, introductory programmes could be held to generate interest and sustained appreciation for art among the public in Singapore.

There are a few ways in which this can be achieved:

◆ **Bring parents and children together for art-appreciation initiatives**

The home is the best starting point for art education.

Since many parents are not well-versed in art appreciation, joint programmes could go a long way towards boosting family bonding and increasing knowledge of art.

◆ **Enhance and increase schools' involvement**

The National Arts Council could consider encouraging art clubs in schools to organise events at the school level.

Coordinated art events would heighten the breadth and depth of students' approaches.

◆ **Expose individuals to digital-art pieces**

More should be done to **dispel** the idea that art pieces comprise only physical works.

Digital art could draw a tech-savvy generation, as it might be able to connect better with such art.

◆ **Use the Internet for promotion and raising awareness**

The Internet can be used to reach out to a larger audience.

◆ **Highlight the uniqueness of Singaporean culture and art**

The distinctiveness of Singaporean art should be showcased.

Art might not **bestow** immediate benefits, but the gains can be determined only by an individual's willingness to engage in it.

As areas of knowledge and education are diversified and fields of specialisation open up for students, Singapore might have much to gain if it increases its citizens' standards of art appreciation.

MR KWAN JIN YAO

◆ *The writer is a full-time national serviceman who blogs about current affairs.*

HELPDESK 我的字典

Art appreciation: 艺术欣赏
yì shù xīn shǎng

Tangible: 具体的 jù tǐ de

Dispel: 驱散 qū sǎn

Bestow: 授予 shòu yǔ

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myp@sph.com.sg

Please include your full name, address and a telephone contact number. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.

Banks simply
processors in
spa debacle

I REFER to *my paper* reports on the closure of beauty chain Wax in the City. We wish to clarify that banks are only facilitators of payment transactions between cardholders and merchants.

An agreement with regard to the supply of goods/services purchased is a commercial arrangement between cardholders and merchants. Issuing and acquiring banks are only "processors" of a transaction.

It would be inappropriate to hold banks responsible for deficiencies in the delivery of goods/services by merchants. This should be solely the responsibility of merchants and, in the event of default, should be addressed through legal remedy.

Making chargebacks mandatory does not address the fundamental issue of customers signing up for product offerings willingly and under no duress.

It was also suggested that "banks not approve full package payments to businesses (in the) beauty and spa (industries), but allow the businesses to deduct payment only on an instalment or 'when treated' basis".

Being processors of a transaction, it is not practicable and not within the scope of issuing and/or acquiring banks to ascertain the schedule of consumption between each merchant and cardholder.

We commend the Spa and Wellness Association's initiative to have its members insured together. This is good for the industry, as customers will be assured that they are dealing with credible merchants.

MRS ONG-ANG AI BOON

DIRECTOR

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