

## Ensure the poor gain from economic growth



By KWAN JIN YAO

THE report, "Why economy is growing so fast" (*my paper*, May 21), provides an excellent summary of Singapore's quarterly economic performance and how the economy has been able to ride out the economic crisis.

Our recovery has been led largely by the **manufacturing** and tourism sectors.

As an export-based economy, our focus on electronics and chemicals has also reaped tremendous dividends because of the surge in global demand after last year's financial crisis.

The establishment of the integrated resorts at Sentosa and

Marina Bay, coupled with sporting events and conventions, have contributed to drawing tourists from around the world.

However, Singapore endured some **hard knocks** over the past year, and the unemployment rate grew for a period.

The cost of living rose and many workers had to take pay cuts, whether directly or by working fewer hours, for example, to protect their rice bowls.

There are also some who are still looking for jobs.

As the economic situation in Singapore is improving, the Government and employers must ensure that the **sacrifices** made by workers were not in vain.

Wages should be allowed to rise in tandem with price increases to maintain the affordability of basic goods and a decent standard of living.

Low-income households still need help.

These are **trying times**, be-

cause an economic rejuvenation does not always mean that wealth trickles down to those who need it the most.

Income inequality remains a niggling blemish on our record.

Schemes to help the underprivileged need to be more targeted and should cater to individuals on a case-by-case basis.

Ultimately, economic growth on paper would mean very little if affluence is not fairly distributed across the population.

◆ *The writer is a full-time national serviceman who blogs about current affairs at <http://guanyinmiao.wordpress.com>*

### HELPDESK 我的字典

**Manufacturing:** 制造业 zhì zào yè

**Hard knocks:** 沉重的打击 chén zhòng de dǎ jī

**Sacrifices:** 牺牲 xī shēng

**Trying times:** 困难的时期 kùn nán de shí qī

## Allow dependants to pay DPS premiums

PREMIUMS for the Dependents' Protection Scheme (DPS) are paid with funds from a Central Provident Fund (CPF) member's own account.

If there are insufficient funds, cash must be used.

As the CPF Board allows a member to pay MediShield premiums with a dependant's CPF funds, perhaps this could also be allowed for the payment of DPS premiums.

On another note, CPF members who require dentures cannot claim the cost of making them from their Medisave accounts.

As the population is ageing, perhaps the CPF Board could consider approving such claims on a case-by-case basis.

MR DAVID SOH POH HUAT

## Pavement needed for heavily used road

THERE is a 500m stretch in Benoi Road, between International and Upper Jurong roads that is heavily used by pedestrians, especially during peak hours on weekdays.

However, there is no pavement and people have to walk on uneven grass patches, which have many potholes.

Some pedestrians resort to walking on the road to avoid tripping over the potholes and getting injured.

Could the authorities construct a pavement there?

Traffic is heavy during peak hours and many heavy vehicles ply that road, making it dangerous for pedestrians.

MR PAUL ANTONY FERNANDEZ

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