

Fund-raising call to community groups

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— President Tony Tan Keng Yam (fourth from far right), at the launch of the President's Challenge. With him are (from right) Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Social and Family Development; former president SR Nathan; Ms Low Yen Ling, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development; and Dr Della Lee of the Lee Foundation.

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President's Challenge to get more grassroots and clan groups involved

By CALVIN YANG

THIS year's President's Challenge will look to get more community groups involved in fund raising and encourage Singaporeans to give back in areas they have a passion for.

As the nation celebrates its Golden Jubilee, Singaporeans must also think about how to move forward as a community, President Tony Tan Keng Yam said at the President's Challenge Commemorative Dinner at the Istana yesterday.

In his speech, Dr Tan highlighted the progress Singapore has made over the past 50 years and touched on the importance of building an inclusive society.

“We have made progress, but Singapore today has different challenges compared to those faced by our founding fathers,” said Dr Tan. “Our individual needs and aspirations may take different paths. But as we pursue our own interests, we must also continue to care for others who are different from us, especially those who need help.”

Guests included former president SR Nathan, who initiated the annual fund-raising event in 2000, and Minister for Social and Family Development Chan Chun Sing.

Dr Tan called on community groups such as grassroots organisations, clan associations and schools to get involved in this year's Challenge and give back in areas they can best contribute.

He urged Singaporeans to help the less fortunate through various means such as sports and the arts. The Singapore Sports Hub has even offered the use of its venues for the cause.

Since it was introduced, the President's Challenge has raised \$150 million for more than 500

good causes, such as helping children with special needs, the disabled, the elderly and needy families.

Dr Tan also recognised 32 organisations and individuals who together have donated more than \$90 million. These include the Lee Foundation, Singapore Pools and YMCA Singapore.

YMCA president Stephen Loh said: “The Challenge has certainly raised the awareness on the plight of the needy. We hope to continue providing platforms for volunteers to help others.”

Singapore Pools chairman Koh Choon Hui said: “It is important that more organisations come on board to help those who are less fortunate among us.”

✉ calyang@sph.com.sg