

Remembering Mrs Lee's legacy ... She would not have wanted anything elaborate

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Today, 4 October 2010

Though she never held any official posts, Madam Kwa Geok Choo played a central role in the founding of Singapore by acting as Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew's companion, confidante and counsel in their 63 years of marriage.

Indeed, Mdm Kwa, who passed away aged 89 on Saturday, was instrumental in the founding of independent Singapore: She drafted part of the 1965 Separation Agreement with Malaysia.

So how should Singapore make sure that Mrs Lee's legacy will live on?

Dr Gillian Koh, a senior research fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies, said: "Beyond funeral arrangements, what more can the State do to formally recognise Mrs Lee?"

While the Government could, as in the case of the late Dr Goh Keng Swee, for instance, decide to name an institution after Mrs Lee, Dr Koh noted that was for a founding father of the nation.

Mrs Lee, however, had not held any formal political positions. "Perhaps they can make an exception; she's a role model for all working mothers," Dr Koh said.

But like many others, Dr Koh felt that Mrs Lee would likely not want anything too elaborate, given her proclivity for keeping a low profile over the years.

Ms Indranee Rajah, a Member of Parliament for Tanjong Pagar GRC, felt that Mrs Lee was "a rare individual who contributed to Singapore in an unofficial capacity".

Her work on the Separation Agreement, among others, was a "commemoration in itself and will endure throughout time as it is an indelible imprint that has given rise to Singapore's sovereignty".

Former MP Davinder Singh said: "Mrs Lee would not have wanted a monument to herself or any other form of overt recognition.

"The most fitting way to respect her memory is to remember that she believed in the purity of her husband's motives and mission, and to silently pray for her in gratitude for her role in giving us and our children a dignified life."