

## **SG PM's pay 43.3 times of Singaporeans' while UK PM's pay only 4.4 times of Londoners'**

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In Parliament on Monday (5 Feb), Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said that it is not necessary to set up a specific inter-ministerial committee to look into how to better integrate social classes in Singapore.

He was responding to questions in Parliament if there are plans by his Government to ensure that the income gap between different groups will not cause a social divide.

Concerns over the social divide in Singapore came about when the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) released a report last December revealing that class boundaries tend to be more noticeable in Singapore than gender, racial or religious boundaries.

Citing studies, PM Lee even boasted that Singapore's social mobility is far better when compared with other countries.

"One study, looking at the proportion of children from the 20 per cent of households with the lowest incomes who do well in life and later reach the 20 per cent of households with the highest incomes, found a higher proportion in Singapore making this transition than in the United States or Denmark," he said.

He also added that Singapore's Gini coefficient - a measure of income inequality – is similar to or lower than other large metropolitan centres such as Beijing, Shanghai, London, New York and San Francisco.

In fact, he noted that Singapore's income inequality has declined slightly over the last 10 years, with the Gini coefficient falling from 0.470 in 2006 to 0.458 in 2016, its lowest in a decade. After accounting for Government taxes and transfers, the 2016 figure was even lower at 0.402, he explained.

Of course, PM Lee neglected to say that for those citizens in Beijing, Shanghai, London, New York or San Francisco, if they find living in big cities expensive, they can easily move to other less expensive areas in China, UK or US. But for Singaporeans, we live on an island and any attempt to move out of Singapore means we will drop straight into the sea surrounding us.

Politicians' pay vs median salary of citizens

In any case, if we were to compare politicians' pay against the median salary of ordinary working citizens in those cities, Singapore will surely come up top beating Beijing, Shanghai, London, New York or San Francisco.

Take the case of London, UK:

PM's annual salary - £150,402 (S\$276,692)

MP's annual salary - £74,962 (most of them work full-time) (S\$137,906)

Median annual salary of citizens working in London - £34,473 (S\$63,419)

This means:

UK's PM salary to Londoners' is 4.4 times

UK's MP (full-time) salary to Londoners' is 2.2 times

And in Singapore:

PM's annual salary - S\$2,200,000

MP's annual salary - S\$192,500 (most of them work part-time)

Median annual salary of residents working in Singapore (including Employer CPF) - S\$50,784

This means:

SG's PM salary to Singaporeans' is 43.3 times

SG's MP (part-time) salary to Singaporeans' is 3.8 times

If our MP's full-time salary from work outside of Parliament is included, their salary can easily be at least 5 to 7 times more than that of an ordinary citizen.

For example, it has been reported in the media that MP Edwin Tong can easily make more than S\$1 million alone just from taking up Kong Hee's case as a Senior Counsel. Ordinary Singaporeans can't even earn that amount in their whole life time.