Next, a peek at seven issues that are brewing querulously for—now.

**IMMIGRATION**

An emotional topic in Singapore since the late 1990s, "mother Tongue" and "return" were topics in our national discourse but did not really stir Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong from raising the issue prominently at the National Day Rally.

Expect more debate on this, especially with a wider range of immigrant types being sought. Also, with the naturalization process looking at an average of five years per new citizen, the government is likely to be more open to the idea of expatriates coming to Singapore to "live and work" for the longer term.

**GOVERNMENT SALARIES**

The labour market is tightening. Economic growth rates have been good recently. And overseas firms are getting their brightest graduates to stay here. So, the top salaries are likely to be more competitive. The government is also aware of the need to sharpen its national image and is likely to take up some of the premium pricing. However, there may be some resistance from the market to a clear-cut increase in salaries. This is especially true for new talents, who are likely to be more motivated by the opportunity to be part of an emerging company rather than a large, established one.

**RECOGNITION FOR FOUNDING FATHERS**

The government has been promoting the "精神 of the Founding Father" and "Honouring the Founding Father" as part of the 50th Anniversary commemorations. However, the government is likely to be more restrained in its approach, as there may be concerns about prolonging the debate on the "National Hero" status for Tan Seng Giaw, the last surviving member of the Malayan Communist Party.

**SOCIETAL DIVIDES**

The government is looking at ways to address the widening gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" in Singapore. This is particularly true in the area of healthcare, with the government looking at ways to improve access and affordability. However, the government is also aware of the need to balance the interests of different groups, such as the elderly, who may be less able to afford medical care.

**SPECIAL AWARD**

The government is likely to continue to promote the "National Hero" status for Tan Seng Giaw, the last surviving member of the Malayan Communist Party. This is to ensure that the memory of the Founding Father is kept alive and that the government is able to, in some way, honour him for his contributions to Singapore.

**NEWS HEADLINE**

"Hot talk" refers to discussions or debates on important topics. In this context, "Hot talk" refers to the discussions on immigration that were taking place in Singapore during the 1990s. The term is used to highlight the intensity of the debate and the strong emotions it elicited.