



The five new faces among the new crop of NMPs are (from far left) law professor Mahdev Mohan, theatre group artistic director Kok Heng Leun, unionist K. Thanaletchimi, auto company senior vice-president Azmoon Ahmad and media company executive vice-president Ganesh Rajaram (right).
 ST, BH FILE PHOTOS

Line-up of NMPs includes two who are under 40

Youngest among them is a 37-year-old law professor; group of nine represents range of interests

Tham Yuen-C
 Assistant Political Editor

Among the five new faces selected to be Nominated MPs are a 37-year-old law professor, an artistic director of a theatre company, and high-ranking company executives.

The latest crop of nine NMPs also sees four familiar faces returning to Parliament for the second time.

They are entrepreneur Kuik Shiao-Yin, 39, corporate lawyer Chia Yong Yong, 54, labour economist Randolph Tan, 52, and business-

man Thomas Chua, 62.

A special parliamentary select committee had picked the nine NMPs, the maximum allowed under the Constitution, from among 41 who applied for the post.

The new line-up replaces the previous group, whose term lapsed when Parliament was dissolved ahead of last September's general election. They had served only one year of their 2½-year term.

The select committee, in a report on its selection process given to Parliament yesterday, said: "Most of the persons proposed were of a high quality and this made the selec-

tion of nine candidates a challenge.

Ms Grace Fu, Leader of the House and a committee member, said: "Besides their individual qualities, the candidates were selected bearing in mind the issues that we will discuss in this Parliament session - including economic transformation and skills training framework, development of media and art sectors, changes to the Constitution and building a caring and resilient society."

The line-up has two members younger than 40. Besides Ms Kuik, who said she will focus on education and the younger generation, there is also new face, Singapore Management University assistant professor of law Mahdev Mohan, 37, whose expertise includes public international law, regulatory com-

pliance, and international arbitration in Asia.

The other first-time NMPs represent a range of interests. They are theatre group artistic director Kok Heng Leun, 50, media company executive vice-president Ganesh Rajaram, 49, auto company senior vice-president Azmoon Ahmad, 54, and unionist K. Thanaletchimi, 50.

Mr Azmoon of Desay SV Automotive is a member of the Committee on the Future Economy, tasked to develop new strategies for economic development. "Work takes me out of Singapore and I see the competition outside. We have to be nimble to capitalise on these trends."

Representing the arts community is Mr Kok. The artistic director of Drama Box said: "We are very happy we have a voice again in Parlia-

ment to speak about the arts."

He wants to speak on issues like censorship, and hopes to lend a cultural perspective to discussions on the economy and other policies.

Mr Ganesh, from FremantleMedia International, is on the board of the Media Development Authority of Singapore. He said he hopes to focus not just on issues affecting the media industry, but also sports. "I used to play hockey for Singapore and my son is a keen footballer, so I'm also interested in the development of sports. We have all the facilities, but how do you use them to produce world-class athletes?"

Ms Thanaletchimi, meanwhile, has been president of the Healthcare Services Employees' Union for 20 years.

The select committee also considered whether to release the names of all the 41 candidates.

As they did not make their names public, the committee decided against it, the report said.

"Revealing the names of unsuccessful candidates may give rise to speculation and public debate on their suitability. This may deter potentially good applicants from participating in the nomination process in the future," it added.

yuenc@sph.com.sg

Second-time NMPs (from top)

corporate lawyer Chia Yong Yong, businessman Thomas Chua, entrepreneur Kuik Shiao-Yin and labour economist Randolph Tan.