

**Vivian: Government to provide information that is more open in keeping with new media trend**

The new-generation Internet provides even greater interaction and this has allowed the public and the government to engage in more wide-ranging dialogue. The Government will go along with the trend of new media by providing information that is more open and inviting Singaporeans to participate in public consultation in order to draw up solutions in an open and consultative manner.

Touching on how new media is changing the role of the Government at the 7th Annual PR Academy Conference last Thursday, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, said that the popularisation of information technology had allowed people to file income tax, apply for licences or bid for Government projects on the Internet, which not only had helped improve the Government's administrative efficiency but also meant that the Government must be more transparent.

Dr Vivian said that when governments posted information of tenders on the Internet, the public would be able to access such information easily, thus reducing behind-the-scenes manipulation or corruption. Governments would lose their monopoly on information and the role of governments would have to change, he added.

Dr Vivian also pointed out that given the trend towards openness in information, the Government would try as far as possible to give full information and more space for discussion, so as to find solutions.

Making clear the Government's stand on new media, Dr Vivian repeatedly stressed that whether it was new media or traditional media like newspapers, books or television, they must remain honest and credible. Honesty was one competitive advantage of Singapore and should also be the common value of both new and traditional media, added Dr Vivian.