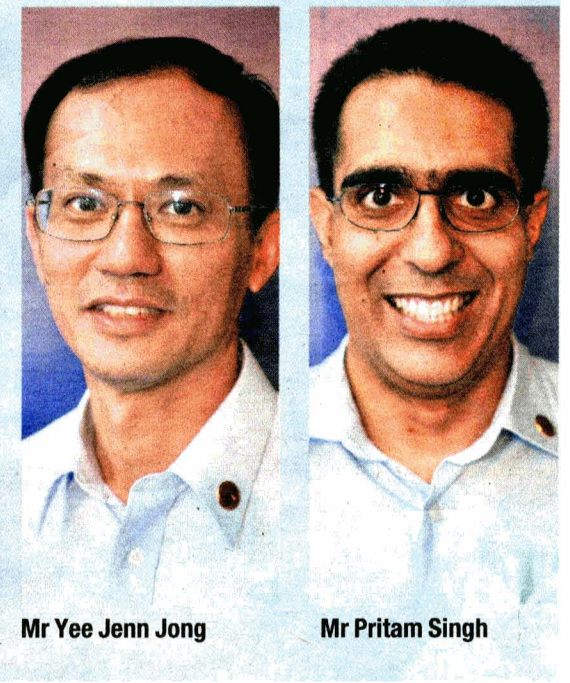




WP'S NEW CANDIDATES:
Ms Glenda Han Su May and Mr Chen Show Mao.

TNP PICTURES:
KUA CHEE SIONG



Mr Yee Jenn Jong

Mr Pritam Singh

Ms Glenda Han, who was part of WP's six-man 'suicide squad' in 2006 GE, to contest again under WP ticket

She doesn't want to be a one-hit wonder babe

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SHE'S back. Ms Glenda Han Su May, 35, who was part of Workers' Party's (WP) six-man "suicide squad" which contested in Ang Mo Kio GRC in the 2006 General Election, will be contesting again under the WP ticket.

The team received close to 34 per cent of the votes against Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's team.

Ms Han was one of four candidates introduced at the WP headquarters at Jalan Besar yesterday.

Will she add to the buzz created by two other young women candidates?

National Solidarity Party's Nicole Seah and People's Action Party's (PAP) Tin Pei Ling have become popular topics of discussion among netizens and also in coffee shop chatter.

She was one of the youngest women candidates in 2006. Some people on the Young PAP website had dubbed her a "hot babe" and she was greeted with wolf whistles at her maiden rally speech.

Five years on, more young women have stepped forward as candidates.

Yet, the attention on them hasn't waned.

She said: "I think (the 2006 election) was the start of the younger ones stepping forward, so I guess that kind of created some attention then."

"If you want to compare it to now, this being only the next general election, it's not surprising that it is still something new for people."

How did Ms Han cope with the attention at that time?

By taking it in her stride.

She said: "It didn't faze me. After graduation, (with) the things I did, like starting my businesses, I was always told that I was young to do what I do."

"People would think that I couldn't do it; likewise, when I stepped up politically. I guess I was quite used to the comment (by) then."

This time round, Ms Han thinks that the heat will

be off her as people already know who she is.

She also did not think that the amount of attention on young women candidates would discourage other young women from stepping forward.

"I think if people are really interested in politics, these are just external factors," Ms Han said.

Also, the higher amount of scrutiny on young women candidates is not always negative.

Ms Han believes the experience of the candidates would allow people who are interested in politics to be better prepared and to better understand what is in store for them, should they decide to take the leap forward.

How does she feel about returning as a candidate?

She said: "I hope that, in a way, they would also see that I have been serious in the political scene since then."

"It's not like in the music industry, (where) you're a one-hit wonder, you come, you stand and then you disappear. I didn't want to be that way anyway."

But after being based in Hong Kong for more than three years, how would she connect with voters?

It's not an issue, Ms Han said, adding: "I don't think I've really left Singapore in that sense because it's been only 3 1/2 years."

Ground activities

"During this time, I've been back every other month (and stay between a week and a month). Every time I'm back, I'm with the Workers' Party doing ground activities."

Would she move back to Singapore if she gets elected?

Yes, said Ms Han, she would make her political career her focus.

What if she doesn't get elected?

She said: "I think that's being hypothetical; we'll see what happens."

The other candidates introduced yesterday were WP's "star" catch, international lawyer Chen Show Mao, 50; entrepreneur Yee Jenn Jong, 46; and Mr Pritam Singh, 34, a Juris Doctor candidate at the Singapore Management University.

Although all three are new candidates, Mr Chen was clearly the one who drew the most attention and interest at the press conference.

Not only were most of the questions directed at him, but he was also besieged by reporters with more questions for a good 30 minutes after the press conference ended.

Yesterday's introduction was the last batch of candidates to be introduced.

This brings the total number - with the addition of WP secretary-general Low Thia Khiang and chairman Sylvia Lim - to 23, WP's biggest team since 1988.

WP is contesting in four GRCs and four SMCs.