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## 15,000 rail workers needed by 2030

**This is to support expansion of rail network and improve reliability: Transport Minister**

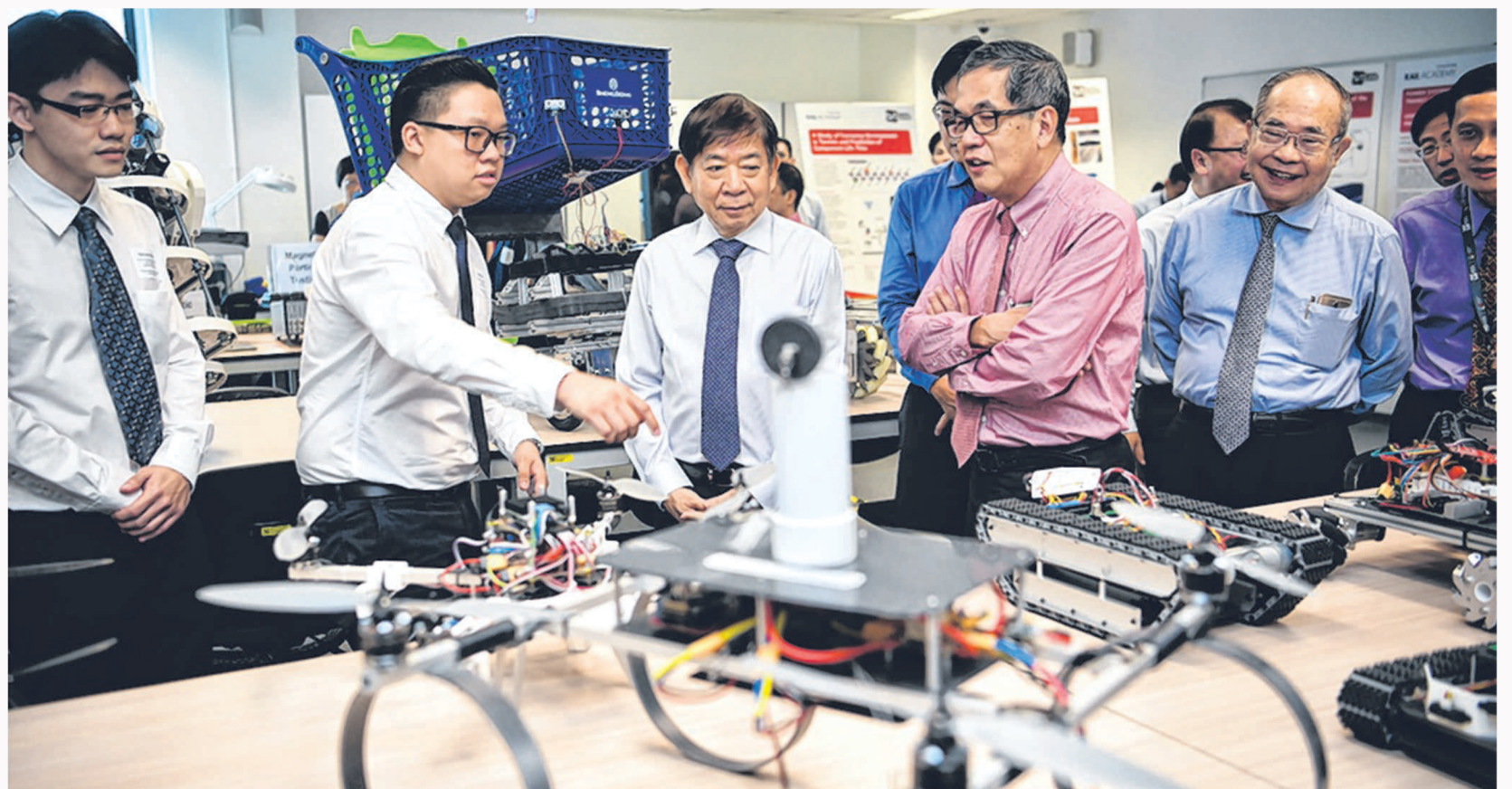
**Zhaki Abdullah**

The rail sector here will need to grow to 15,000 workers by 2030, as Singapore expands its MRT network and works to improve rail reliability, said Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan yesterday.

Speaking at the launch of the Singapore Rail Academy (SGRA) at the Singapore Institute of Technology

ability, said Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan yesterday.

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Mr Samuel Tan (second from left), 24, a second-year SIT student taking a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Systems Engineering course, showing Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan (in blue tie) a series of student prototypes at the Systems Engineering Lab 2 after the official launch of the Singapore Rail Academy (SGRA) yesterday. With the minister are SIT president Tan Thiam Soon (in pink shirt) and SGRA chairman Cham Tao Soon (in light blue shirt). ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

### Easing the transit into rail industry

Mr Tan Kiat Beng had worked in the oil and gas sector for three years when he decided it was time for a change.

Three months ago, the 30-year-old mechanical engineer joined the Land Transport Authority (LTA) as an operations and maintenance executive engineer.

"The rail industry will be definitely booming over the next few

years," he said, pointing to the expected expansion of the rail network to 360km by 2030.

Mr Tan is part of the pioneer batch of students under the Career On-boarding for Railway Engineering (Core) programme, a collaboration between the Singapore Rail Academy and the Employment and Employability Institute.

The programme aims to help

upgrade and reskill both new and mid-career entrants to the rail sector here by teaching them about various aspects of the industry, such as regulation and finance.

A three-day foundation module for the programme, held last month, drew 30 engineers from LTA, SMRT and SBS Transit.

"The course helped me to get to know the industry better, and get

to know my counterparts in SMRT and SBS Transit better," said Mr Tan, who helps review the maintenance regime of rail operators to improve rail reliability.

Core is not the only initiative aimed at skills upgrading for the transport sector.

Yesterday, the inaugural Public Transport Awards recognised the efforts of 47 students and profes-

sionals pursuing courses relevant to public transport.

They received scholarships, as well as book prizes and training grants.

One recipient is Mr Lee Xiang Han, 26, a final-year student at the Singapore Institute of Technology pursuing a degree in sustainable infrastructure engineering.

He will join SBS Transit as a

rolling stock engineer when he graduates later this year.

Though he has a diploma in aerospace engineering, Mr Lee chose to go into public transport as he saw a lot of room for "development" in the rail sector.

"We need to have our own pool of rail talent here," he said.

**Zhaki Abdullah**