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Ms M. Premikha is Prime Minister in the model Parliament. PHOTO: NUS TAMIL LANGUAGE SOCIETY

Singapore gets 'first female premier'

Toh Ting Wei

Singapore is getting its first female prime minister – albeit in a model Parliament setting.

Ms M. Premikha, 20, who is starting classes at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine next month, is taking up the role of Prime Minister at the 4th Singapore Model Parliament (SMP) till Sunday.

The Raffles Institution graduate said: "It is a very proud moment, because we have never had a female prime minister in Singapore or even in SMP before."

Mr Chris Chia, 24, president of the NUS Political Science Society, a co-organiser of the SMP, revealed that Ms Premikha was chosen from among three candidates. He said: "Premikha exhibited a clear understanding in assessing the abilities of her bench members, and also displayed keen leadership qualities."

Held at The Arts House, the first day of the event – which will also be held on Thursday and Sunday – took place yesterday.

Bills that will be up for debate include the Central Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill and Prevention of Human Trafficking Bill. Some 72 speakers will take on various portfolios in the model Parliament, including playing opposition roles.

ing playing opposition roles. In addition, 18 students will take on the role of journalists. This new initiative allows people with different skill sets to take part in the SMP.

Speaker of Parliament Halimah Yacob, who officiated the SMP opening, praised the event as one that will help youth "better appreciate and value the role and importance of Parliament in upholding democracy in our society"

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Madam Halimah added that it might inspire participants to become part of the Parliament, with Ms Premikha among those considering making the step up.

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Ms Premikha said: "I am in a dilemma as to whether to be a community leader or a political leader in the future, it is a matter of a bottom-up or top-down approach.

"I want to be able to create positive changes in society."