

SPEECH BY MRS JOSEPHINE TEO, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS & MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT) AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF JURONG PORT ACADEMY ON 20 JANUARY 2017, 10.45AM AT JURONG PORT ACADEMY

Mr Ng Chee Keong, Chairman of Jurong Port,

Mr Ooi Boon Hoe, CEO of Jurong Port,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning and thank you for inviting me to be part of the launch of Jurong Port Academy.

From Small Terminal to International Multi-purpose Port Today

2. Jurong Port started operation in 1965, the year Singapore became an independent nation. As Singapore grew, so did Jurong Port. Gradually but steadily, more warehouses and berths were added, and new cranes and conveyor systems introduced. To cater to larger vessels, Jurong Port also deepened the channel. These timely enhancements enabled Jurong Port to play a key role in supporting Singapore's industrialisation efforts.

3. In 1974, cargo throughput was 3 million tonnes. This doubled to 6 million tonnes about a decade later. Jurong Port now handles close to 20 million tonnes of cargo annually. It is the gateway terminal for general and bulk cargo in the region.

4. The key to Jurong Port's success lies in its ability to adapt to evolving needs. In 1997, to support the growth of domestic construction and infrastructure projects, you commissioned a common-user cement terminal. Today, cement accounts for almost 80% of bulk cargo Jurong Port handles.

Preparing Jurong Port for the Future

5. Looking to the future, Jurong Port could face three key challenges.

6. First, remaining relevant to your customers. The shipping industry is undergoing disruptive changes. The container market is set for further consolidation after an eventful year in 2016, marked by the collapse of Hanjin. There are also signs of consolidation in bulk and tanker segments. In this environment of slow growth and low margins, Jurong Port will have to double its efforts to increase its value proposition to its customers.

7. The recent commissioning of the new Combi Terminal is a step in the right direction. With the new Combi Terminal, multipurpose vessels can unload both their container and general cargo at a single berth, instead of having to berth twice at two separate berths. This greatly reduces the time vessels have to spend in port.

8. The second challenge is doing more with less. I am told that, with the help of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), Jurong Port has undertaken productivity studies and is working to implement process improvements and technological solutions to intensify land use, boost labour productivity and reduce turnaround times.

9. Like Singapore, many ports worldwide are striving to do more through technology and innovation. We must expect that along with the use of more sophisticated equipment, jobs in the port sector will transform.

Vital to Up-skill Port Workers

10. The third, and probably the most important challenge for Jurong Port is up-skilling port workers to prepare them for new jobs. It is inevitable that some jobs will change. Some port workers will have to learn how to operate new equipment, such as the new side-loaders Jurong Port acquired late last year. Others may have to perform new functions, for example after manual processes become automated. Port workers will need support and help to upgrade their skills and capabilities.

Launch of Jurong Port Academy

11. The setting up of Jurong Port Academy is therefore an important commitment by Jurong Port to up-skill our port workers and make learning a continuous journey. The establishment of the Academy is also in line with the national SkillsFuture movement.

12. At the Academy, port workers will benefit from structured trainings conducted in a conducive learning environment. Besides participating in classroom-based trainings, port workers can use the crane simulator to develop “muscle memory” for new processes. This will be complemented by on-site training. The Academy will play a key role in equipping port workers not just with the skills to handle new technologies, equipment and processes, but more importantly the confidence to continually adapt and work in new and more productive ways.

Conclusion

13. In closing, let me congratulate Jurong Port once again on the opening of the Academy. Please join me now to officially launch the Jurong Port Academy!

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