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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR MATTHIAS YAO CHIH, MINISTER OF

STATE FOR DEFENCE, AT THE CHINGAY 27 SINGAPORE THANK-YOU RECEPTION ON MONDAY, 1 MAR
99 AT

8.00 PM AT THE WESTIN STAMFORD

Good evening, Ladies & Gentlemen

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May I extend a very warm welcome to you.

The Chingay Organisers and I would like to thank all of you for your time and effort
in making Chingay 27 a big success.

We are particularly grateful to our friends from Australia, China,
Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and
Vietnam.

Your participation enhanced the standing of Chingay Parade as an
international event and strengthened the friendship between our countries.

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I do hope you are enjoying your stay here and will go home with good memories about Singapore.

I want to also thank the embassies and local representative offices of the various countries for acting as the link between the Chingay Organisers and participating groups.

Without your recommendations, it would not have been possible for us to secure the participation of your country's best performing groups.

On behalf of the Chingay Organisers, I would also like to thank the Singaporean groups for your exciting performances.

Our appreciation goes to the Chong Hua Tong Tou Teck Hwee, Singapore Sikh Community, Singapore Dragon and Lion Athletic Association, Singapore Foochow Association, Singapore Soka Association, SAF Music and Drama Company, Team 27 (Harley Davidson), Skating Federation of Singapore, Jitterbugs Singapore and Dancer Productions for their continued support of Chingay.

We look forward to your participation in the future Chingay Parades.

A new feature in this year's Parade was the introduction of the Cascading Procession involving 650 members of cultural troupes from the nine Community Development Councils.

It was indeed a spectacular sight when the whole of Orchard Road came alive at 8.00 pm that night.

All of you did your Community Development Councils proud with your enthusiastic displays in this "Community Cultural Expression".

On behalf of the Chingay Organisers, I want to thank the nine Community Development Councils for their contributions to this new segment of the Parade.

Over the past 27 years, Chingay has evolved from a Lunar New Year procession with a local flavour into a grand international event.

Chingay has come thus far because we have the generous support of many sponsors.

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We are glad that despite the current economic slowdown in this region, we have continued to receive support from the Singapore Tourism Board,

Singapore Pools Private Limited, New Century Cruise Lines, Television Corporation of Singapore, China Yunnan Airlines, On Cheong Jewellery, Singapore Totalisator Board, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Foundation, NTUC Income Insurance Co-operative Ltd, Ngee Ann City and Hotel Miramar.

We are also happy to welcome our new corporate sponsors, Singapore Airlines, Silkair, Xpress Multimedia, Stratagem Consultants, AQUA Mountain Spring Water, Tiger Beer, Waltz Ice Cream, Philippine National Bank and Tech-men Communication Group Pte Ltd.

We look forward to their continued support in future.

We also want to acknowledge the contributions of our co-organisers, the Singapore Hotel Association and National Wushu Federation.

The Singapore Hotel Association has generously sponsored the delicious meals for our international participants.

The National Wushu Federation has provided lion and dragon dances for Chingay year after year.

It is with your contributions and efforts, even when times are bad, that we are able to maintain the grandeur of Chingay.

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I am confident that with the continued support of everyone here, Chingay is well on the way to becoming a world class event.

I wish you all a very enjoyable and pleasant evening.