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Subject: (Embargoed) Speech by Assoc. Prof. Ho Peng Kee, 17 Jul 99, 5.30pm.

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY ASSOC. PROF. HO PENG KEE, MINISTER  
OF STATE (LAW & HOME AFFAIRS) AND PRESIDENT OF  
CIVIL DEFENCE ASSOCIATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICEMEN,  
AT THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE  
2ND PHASE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS BUKIT BATOK  
COUNTRY CLUB ON SATURDAY 17 JUL 99 AT 5.30 PM

Commissioner James Tan

Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen

I am pleased to officiate this afternoon at this Ground Breaking ceremony of the second phase development of this CDANS Country Club here at Bukit Batok.

Costing about \$5 million dollars, a 3-storey building will be built on this site as part of this sprawling country club complex. It will house a 24-lane bowling alley and a 36-lane air rifle range, both meeting international sporting standards. This facility will be completed by August 2000. When ready, our 68,000 CDANS members will have access to more sporting and recreational facilities for their enjoyment at this clubhouse. More members and their families will then spend their free time here. This will facilitate greater bonding amongst NSmen outside of their in-camp training.

The successful launch of this project sets three milestones for CDANS. First, it was done in a very short span of time. Many of you would recall that this clubhouse was opened just 16 months ago. When we gathered here on 30th March last year for its official opening, we were thrilled by the numerous sports and recreational facilities made available to our members. The construction of this main clubhouse was completed within 13 months. The commitment and support from the government, which gave more than \$14 million, was instrumental in making the first phase of this project possible. These past 16 months have seen this Clubhouse grow from strength to strength.

Secondly, our NSmen played a major role in this project. During the opening ceremony last year, the Minister for Home Affairs issued a challenge to the management committee to raise their own funds for the second phase of this project. The Association's Management Committee, formed by a group of dedicated national servicemen and regular officers, spurred on by the Minister's call, rose to the challenge. Their task has been made more difficult as Singapore is still recovering from the economic recession. Our National Servicemen were involved at every stage of this project. They injected into the project their civilian expertise, contacts and business acumen. Many of them spent many nights discussing details of the project, evaluating the tenders and negotiating with suppliers and contractors. The enthusiasm and commitment shown by these CDNSmen is indeed commendable. I would like to see more NSmen involved in organising activities and running our two clubhouses – here at Bukit Batok and the town clubhouse at Riverside Point.

Thirdly, we have successfully brought onboard corporate citizens like the Shaw

Foundation and Singapore Pools which have decided to recognise contributions of Civil Defence

National Servicemen in concrete terms. The two organisations have each pledged \$1 million to

this second phase of this clubhouse. Through their sponsorships, our vision of

provi di ng

wholesome sports and recreational facilities for our NSmen has become closer to reality. Our

dream of helping Singapore nurture and train world class sportsmen in air rifle shooting and

bowling can now be realised faster. Also, let me on behalf of our members, express our sincere

appreciation to Shaw Foundation and Singapore Pools. To reciprocate their goodwill, CDANS

has decided to offer corporate memberships to both organisations.

Over the years, CDANS has played its part in nurturing the potential of our CDNSmen. Joining in MHA's drive to transform the Home Team into a learning organisation, CDANS has implemented several initiatives in this area. These include running tuition classes and providing educational awards for members' children, and the setting up of a Reading Room and a Centre for Lifelong Learning in this clubhouse. More significantly, CDANS has also successfully secured sponsorships from established educational institutions to offer enrichment and professional courses for our members. These institutions include SIM, MDIS and just a short while ago, we have signed an MOU with MIS as well. I thank the three organisations for their partnership in making Lifelong Learning not just a mere motto but a reality in the lives of CDNSmen. Together, we will help Singapore to move closer towards its vision of a thinking nation founded on a knowledge-based economy.

Let me conclude by reiterating that CDANS has come a long way over the past seven years. When the 2nd phase is ready, CDANS' mission of bonding CDNSmen will receive a great boost. CDANS will also continue to work hand-in-hand with SPANS and SAFRA to promote the interests of NSmen as a whole. Let me close by issuing a challenge to CDANS MC members – make CDANS a household name in Singapore. To help achieve this, we are this afternoon also re-launching an improved magazine which will be sent to all our CDNSmen. The magazine, renamed "RES-Q" is more professionally done and will be published bi-monthly. The new format is livelier. Its pages will contain many topics of interest to all CDNSmen.

Just as the SCDF is known to Singaporeans as an effective and dependable rescuer and fire-fighting outfit that they can count on, CDANS must become known to all Singaporeans as an organisation that bonds all elements of the SCDF together, such as CD volunteers, CDNSmen, CDNSFs and SCDF regulars. Thank You.

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