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SPEECH BY MR PETER CHEN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AT THE BOYS' BRIGADE

ORCHID NAMING CEREMONY 1999 ON

SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 1999, 10.00 A.M.

AT THE NATIONAL ORCHID GARDEN,

SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS

Good morning

Mr Tan Boon Chiang & Mr S P Chua

Honorary Presidents, The Boys' Brigade

Mr Peter Foo

President, The Boys' Brigade

Dr Chi n See Chung
Di rector of the Singapore Botani c Gardens
Nati onal Parks Board

Di sti ngui shed Guests

Members of The Boys' Bri gade

Ladi es & Gentl eman,

I am pleased to be here this morning for the Orchid Naming Ceremony for The Boys' Brigade. The beautiful orchid is a symbol of national pride for Singaporeans. We often have an orchid named after an individual, but it is unusual for such an honour to be bestowed on an organisation. It is an honour well deserved which recognises the continual contribution by The Boys' Brigade in the training and development of youth in Singapore.

This orchid naming ceremony also marks the launch of the National Orchid Garden and The Boys' Brigade volunteer programme. The programme is of a kind that befits the honour given and received. Under the programme training will be provided by NParks which will nurture within your members the finer points in the appreciation of orchids. But appreciation without sharing is not fulfilling. Your members will be encouraged thereafter to volunteer their services to the National Orchid Garden as guides to other students.

There is also a historical significance in today's naming of an orchid in honour of The Boys' Brigade. This morning's naming ceremony is also a prelude to the celebration of your 70 years of work in Singapore, in the year 2000.

The Boys' Brigade or "BB" has become a household name for many people. We have seen many generations of BB members and leaders moving through the school system and then into society. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, through the Uni formed Groups, you have played an important role in the moulding of our youth during the most formative years of their lives.

The Uni formed Groups make up a major component of the Extra Curricular Activities' programme in schools. Besides providing healthy wholesome activities, uni formed groups help to build a sense of group loyalty and responsibility to our nation.

In The Boys' Brigade, there is the added dimension of spiritual and moral

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development in the total development of our youth. The spiritual development will instill a strong sense of discipline. The moral development will provide the set of values on which the true spirit of community service is founded. However little we have, whether it is wealth, knowledge or talent, there is always someone who has even less. We serve and share because of the love of our fellow men and not on account of some personal gain.

The Boys' Brigade has in recent years become more heavily engaged in community service. The BB's very successful annual Sharity Gift Box project during the Christmas season is a well known item on the calendar of events along Orchard Road. Today, with the launch of the new volunteer programme you will soon put our National Orchid Garden on the school map and help propagate the love and enjoyment of nature.

In order to remain relevant, The Boys' Brigade must continue to develop interesting activities and relevant training programmes that will help nurture our youth into moral upright adults. Much has been done, but much more work awaits you.

On the eve of the 70th Anniversary of The Boys' Brigade in Singapore, I wish you many more years of growth and expansion.

Thank you.

National Archives of Singapore