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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR PETER CHEN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE
FOR EDUCATION AT THE OPENING OF THE TEMASEK
POLYTECHNIC ENGINEERING PROJECT SHOW 2000
ON WEDNESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2000 AT 10.00 AM
IN TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC, AUDITORIUM 1**

National Archives of Singapore

Staff and students of Temasek Polytechnic

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to all of you

Introduction

1 I am delighted to be present at this morning's Official Opening of Temasek

Engineering School's Project Show 2000. I have always been impressed by the creative and practical ideas generated by our Polytechnic students, and I am certain that the projects on display today will continue to exceed expectations.

Today's Ideas, Tomorrow's Reality

2 This year's theme "**ENGenuity@tp: Today's Ideas, Tomorrow's Reality**" is a well-chosen one. As technology will be a key driver of the 21st century economy, the theme has been chosen to capture Singapore's vision to be a technopreneurial nation of the 21st century. Technopreneurs are people who are adaptable and creative in mind and constantly seeking opportunities to add value to the economy. They possess the courage to step into new business areas where others would not dare venture. They are always scanning the horizon for new technologies that will give them a competitive edge over other players in the market.

3 The level of technopreneurship in Singapore has a significant impact on our development as a knowledge-based economy, which is necessary for our continued survival in the global marketplace. It is therefore important to create an environment that is conducive to the growth of a technopreneurial spirit. We need to actively put in place measures to nurture the technopreneurial spirit so that it will become a hallmark of our culture.

Role of Educational Institutions in Technopreneurship

4 Educational institutions, especially polytechnics and universities, play an important role in the realization of our vision of technopreneurship. Polytechnics provide a rich and stimulating environment to train, develop and challenge our students to become technopreneurs. The nature of polytechnic training encourages students to proactively use their knowledge and skills to throw up new ideas. These ideas often exhibit not only originality, resourcefulness, but also a strong sense of practicality. The polytechnics should continue to provide opportunities for students to transform their ideas into actual products and services, which will be the final fruition of their learning experience.

5 Project work is therefore an important part of the polytechnic curriculum. Project work brings out the creativity in students and promotes problem-based learning, and the application of knowledge. While the end product is important,

the process itself provides an equally valuable experience. It calls for the search for information, survey of the market demand, consultation with vendors and experts, the decision of which technology to use and how to produce the desired product using available resources. These activities help to build up confidence and initiative in our students and prepare them for the demands of the realities of the markets.

Project Show

6 The Project Show 2000 is the culmination of the past few months of hard work by students and staff of Temasek Polytechnic. It showcases a total of 450 technical projects from the various diplomas in the School of Engineering. The projects are mainly designed to meet the needs of industry and society at large, while a few aim to provide technological solutions to meet the needs of an ageing population.

7 I am pleased to note that many of the projects have been entered for the Tan Kah Kee Awards, the Singapore Robotics Games and the National Entrepreneurship Competition. In addition, many projects are collaborations with other tertiary institutions like NUS and NTU, and industry, where students are given the chance to work with leaders in their fields. I commend the students for taking up the challenge to test the quality of their work against others. I also commend the polytechnic for its efforts in actively seeking partnership with the universities and industry.

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Concluding Remarks

8 Let me congratulate the staff of Temasek Engineering School and all the students who have contributed to the evident success of this show. It is now my pleasure to declare open the Temasek Polytechnic Engineering Project Show 2000. Thank you.
