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Subject: (Embargoed) Speech by Mr Lee Yock Suan, 26 Feb 2000, 10am

# *Singapore Government*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**SPEECH BY MR LEE YOCK SUAN, MINISTER FOR  
INFORMATION & THE ARTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT,  
AND MP FOR CHENG SAN GRC, AT THE OPENING OF  
RIVERVALE PLAZA AND SENGKANG BRANCH OFFICE  
AND THE LAUNCH OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE LOGO  
ON SAT 26 FEB 2000 AT 10 AM**

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Community leaders, friends, residents, ladies and gentlemen

I am very happy to be here this morning to open Rivervale Plaza and the Sengkang HDB Branch Office as well as to launch HDB's Neighbourhood Centre Logo.

2 Sengkang is one of HDB's newest and fastest growing towns. The first apartment blocks here were completed in 1997. Within barely three years, there are already some 24,000 HDB flats here and many residents are moving in every month. When fully developed, Sengkang will have close to 100,000 flats.

3 Sengkang was formerly a fishing port. Thus, while providing the latest designs and workmanship to the apartment blocks and flats here, HDB has also used modern architectural interpretations to capture the Town's nostalgic past. Hence the theme "Town of the Seafarer". These features have added character to the town and created a unique identity of its own.

4 HDB has nearly 40 years of experience in developing new towns. Being one of the newest towns, Sengkang has the advantage of benefiting from HDB's valuable experience in town planning. For example, Sengkang is the first town where the LRT System is built together with, and not after, the development of the town. In this way, the LRT system could be designed to minimise the walking distance from your homes to the station, while giving you maximum privacy. When completed, you will be able to travel in comfort from your home to the town facilities and to areas outside the Town.

5 Provision of commercial facilities is also very important in the development of any town. Rivervale Plaza is the first neighbourhood centre in Sengkang Town. It has one wet market, one supermarket and 43 shop units, including four eating outlets. Its major anchor tenants include NTUC Fairprice Supermarket, and fast-food restaurants such as McDonalds and KFC.

6 Besides Rivervale Plaza, there are also other shops and eating establishments which are already in operation in Sengkang. More such facilities will be ready in Sengkang as the Town grows, including a 38,500 sq metre mega shopping centre being constructed at the Town Centre.

7 Residents here also have the convenience of their very own HDB Branch Office, located on the second storey of this building. So you can look forward to friendly and quality housing services at your doorstep.

8 This morning, I am also pleased to launch the HDB Neighbourhood Centre Logo. The distinctive abstract icon of a school of fish depicts the flow and interaction among the community at the neighbourhood centre. The four segments represent the four main ethnic groups. The overall logo forms a graceful clockwise movement depicting the centre's continuous effort in providing a convenient one-stop centre for the community. The logo reflects the friendly, modern, vibrant, multi-racial appeal of the new generation of Neighbourhood Centres. While it will be used at all HDB neighbourhood centres, it is particularly fitting to this Town of the Seafarer. It is as if the logo is tailor-made for this place.

9 I hope you are pleased with all these developments in your town. Planning for the facilities here is carried out not just at the macro level but also at the micro level. Hence a Task Force called the Sengkang Town Development Steering Committee was formed in Oct 99 to facilitate the development of infrastructure projects in Sengkang Town. It has Dr Michael Lim and Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, my fellow MPs for Cheng San GRC, as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. The Committee comprises a wide spectrum of representatives from various organisations and service providers --the Ministry of National Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Land Transport Authority, HDB, other agencies as well as grassroots leaders.

10 The setting up of the Committee will enable the various Ministries who plan at the macro level to take into consideration the working details at the ground level so that all the other Ministries will develop their various projects to complement HDB's housing development plans. This will ensure that the required facilities will be made available to residents at the right time and place, thereby

benefiting all parties concerned. This Committee is the first of its kind in an HDB Town.

11 The Committee expects to complete its work within a few months and will reveal its findings for further comments and suggestions from residents. The main committee has met 3 times so far and also received briefings from HDB, SBS, Ministry of Education, other Ministries and agencies.

12 Several improvements have already been made. For example, SBS has provided additional buses for Services 80, 85, 86 and 88. Since December 99, Sengkang residents can take Service 80 direct to Chinatown.

13 For the convenience of residents, a new Cheng San Town Council office has been opened this month at Blk 248 Compassvale Road. This is in addition to the existing Cheng San Town Council offices in Ang Mo Kio and Hougang.

14 With many young couples moving into Sengkang, there will be increasing demand for childcare services including childcare centres, education centres and schools. Nine childcare centres have been completed or are being built and 3 more are planned. Four new education centres have begun operations this year. Four primary schools are in operation and 2 more are being built.

15 To foster neighbourliness and help to look after the estate, several new Residents Committees are being set up. Space has also been allocated for community centres on void decks.

16 With concerted efforts from everyone concerned, Sengkang will be the best home for all its residents – one befitting its name which in Chinese means “prosperous harbour”. I wish all residents of Sengkang and everyone present today a happy and fulfilling future.

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