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SPEECH BY S DHANABALAN
MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AT THE OPENING OF THE PARK NETWORK SYSTEM,
KALLANG RIVER PHASE I ON FRIDAY 14 AUG 92 AT 5.00 PM
AT KALLANG RIVER PARK CONNECTOR (BISHAN ROAD)

1 In 1991, I disclosed plans to link our nature reserves and major parks throughout the island into a network by developing a series of park connectors. This would help us to make the parks more accessible to the public, while maximising pockets of nature in our environment.

2 These park connectors are designed as simple wooded nature corridors running along drainage reserves and buffer zones. Many of these connectors will be through, or near, residential estates. They will also have jogging and cycling tracks. As drainage reserves and buffer zones are used for these connectors, there is hardly any need for additional land.

3 The park connectors will also serve as corridors for birds, thus bringing more birdlife to our parks. With nature and recreational facilities practically at their doorsteps, Singaporeans, I hope, will be encouraged to participate in more outdoor activities, leading to a healthier lifestyle.

4 There will be a number of networks in different parts of the island. For example, Lower Peirce Reservoir will be linked along Kallang River to Kallang Basin; the Pandan Reservoir will be linked along Ulu Pandan Canal to Ghim Moh Estate; and the Pasir Ris Park will be linked along Sungei Tampines to the proposed Tampines Town Park, and eventually, to Bedok Reservoir Park.

5 The Parks and Recreation Department estimates that it will take about thirty years to build and link the different parks into one connected park network system throughout the island. Such a linked network will measure almost 300 km. The development of the park connectors will be integrated with other developments that the connectors will pass through.

6 Some of these connectors will, of necessity, have to cut across roads. At these points, wherever possible, either underpasses or overhead bridges will be built. The system will also be linked, where feasible, to MRT stations, to make it even more convenient for the public to gain access to the parks. Resting places at strategic locations will provide comfort to those needing short rests in between their jogging or cycling.

7 The first stretch of the park network system to be

developed is along the Kallang River. This links Lower Peirce Reservoir to Kallang Riverside Park at Kallang Basin. This seven km long park connector is being constructed in phases.

8 The first phase of the Kallang River park connector, from Bishan Park to Braddell Road, is now ready. I am very happy to see that the residents in the surrounding housing estates are already using this connector. Trees and shrubs for this stretch of the Park Connector are now being planted. In a matter of a few years, they should provide sufficient shade for our joggers and cyclists.

9 It is now my pleasure to declare the first park connector of the Park Network System open. I am sure, that like me, most Singaporeans will be looking forward to the time when they can jog and cycle throughout the island, amidst nature, away from the noise and smoke of vehicular traffic.

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