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**SPEECH BY MR S DHANABALAN,  
MINISTER FOR TRADE & INDUSTRY  
AT THE PUB STAFF UNION'S 26TH ANNIVERSARY  
DINNER AND DANCE ON SATURDAY, 11 SEP 93 AT 7.30 PM  
AT THE MANDARIN BALLROOM, MANDARIN HOTEL**

I am pleased to join you this evening to celebrate the 26th Anniversary of the PUB Staff Union.

2 I note that PUB and its Staff Union have successfully completed a new Collective Agreement in 1992 to provide the framework for the continued cooperation between PUB and its Union. Under this Agreement, PUB employees will also enjoy better fringe benefits amongst other things. The successful conclusion of the new Collective Agreement underscores the good relationship between the Board and its Union, which is very important for the continued success of the Board.

3 However, both the PUB management and the Union must recognise that higher wages and better fringe benefits are possible only with increased productivity. PUB has a monopoly in the supply of electricity and water and also gas to a large extent. But this does not mean that PUB has no competition. PUB's price for its services is an important factor in Singapore's competitive position in the region. It is therefore important for PUB to stay competitive and efficient. The Board has to continually adapt to changes in technologies to enhance its operational efficiency and the quality of its customer service. This means that its employees must also be able to upgrade themselves to keep abreast of technological advances and respond quickly to customers' needs.

4 It is in recognition of this that the Board has always placed great emphasis on staff training and I am happy to note that the PUB Staff Union has been very supportive of the Board's productivity and service improvement programmes. It has encouraged its members to take advantage of the training opportunities provided by the Board. The response by PUB

employees to these training programmes has also been consistently good. I have been told that during 1992, a total of 6,017 employees attended in-house courses while another 4,050 attended overseas and external courses, conferences and seminars. This augurs well for the organisation as it is through such training programmes that the skills of PUB employees are upgraded and their knowledge widened.

5 The good labour-management relations that exist between the PUB and its Union has contributed greatly towards PUB's achievements over the years and is a testimony to our firm belief that unions and employers are partners for progress. It has also shown that a responsible union can rally its members round their organisation for the betterment of both the organisation and its employees.

6 I am confident that the PUB Staff Union will continue to nurture the good labour-management relations that currently exist and rally its members round PUB to meet these challenges.

7 I wish the PUB Staff Union, its leaders and members, a happy 26th Anniversary.

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