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SPEECH BY ENCIK OTHMAN WOK, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS,  
AT THE KNOCKING OF THE FIRST PILE CEREMONY OF THE JURONG  
MOSQUE HELD ON SUNDAY, 9 JANUARY 1977, AT 9.30 A.M.

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- 1 Jurong Town over the years has developed not only as an industrial complex but as a satellite residential town complete with all the social and community amenities necessary for residents to enjoy a full community life. The Jurong Mosque when completed will certainly become the hub of religious activities enriching the spiritual life of Muslims in this area.
- 2 The Jurong Mosque is the third mosque in Singapore to be built under the Mosque Building Fund Scheme started by the Government in May 1975. The mosque is an excellent example of a project made possible through the joint efforts of the Government and the people. Since the Scheme started, contributions from Muslims and well-wishers have been most encouraging. Total monthly collections have been increasing steadily and as at 30 November 1976, \$1,061,522.71 have been collected under the Scheme.
- 3 The Jurong Mosque is scheduled for completion at the end of this year or early 1978. The cost for this 3,242 square metre (34,900 square feet) site is \$122,665 and the estimated construction cost is \$1.2 million.

A further sum of \$50,000 is provided for interior decoration, fittings and furniture. The mosque, when completed, will have ample facilities such as conference rooms, libraries, halls for social gatherings, classrooms, etc. The mosque complex consists of a three-storey main prayer hall/multi-purpose floor space, a three-storey office/living quarters, a two-storey link block and a 29-metre high minaret. The mosque is specially designed by architects of the Housing and Development Board in consultation with the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura and the Jurong Mosque Building Committee. The three parties have taken great pains to ensure that the mosque design will meet the religious and social requirements of Muslims in this area.

4 The Jurong Mosque project started as early as 1969. The Lembaga Jawatan Kuasa Binaan Masjid and the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura negotiated with the Government for a piece of land and the Jurong Town Corporation earmarked a few suitable sites for this purpose. At that time, the proposal to build a mosque seemed an insurmountable task because of the high cost involved. Neither the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura nor the Jurong Mosque Building Committee dreamed of having a large multi-purpose mosque such as the one we are going to build on

this site. The proposal to build a mosque of capacity of at least 1,500 Muslims at that time seems such a far-fetched target. The building of this mosque proves to us that nothing is impossible if we are willing to accept the need to change, to adapt and to co-operate.

5 Today, we have a ceremony for the knocking of the first pile of the Jurong Mosque, and as soon as piling is completed, construction work will commence. In the mean time, the Toa Payoh Mosque which is also built under the Mosque Building Fund Scheme initiated by the Government, is getting its final touches. In Queenstown, construction work of the Queenstown Mosque is proceeding smoothly. Sites for the Chai Chee Mosque and the Woodlands Mosque have also been finalised. All these go to show the extent of Government support given to the various Mosque Building Committees to ensure that their plans to build mosques in their particular satellite towns will be realised. Much, however, depends upon ourselves for we must make the effort to give generously towards the Mosque Building Fund which now stands slightly over a million dollars. The contributions come mainly from CPF contributors totalling about 105,000 persons. There are only about 6,500 self-employed Muslims contributing regularly to the Mosque

Building Fund on a voluntary basis. I would like to urge more non-CPF contributors to come forward to support the Mosque Building Fund Scheme and to give more to the Mosque Building Fund so that the mosque building programme can be expedited.

6 Mosques like other community institutions are but brick and concrete. Whether these will become living institutions, serving the needs of the people will depend upon the life breathed into these institutions by the people themselves. In particular, meaningful religious programmes will have to be planned so that forward-looking guidance can be given to the people especially to the young. We have planned the mosques as multi-purpose institutions to serve the religious and social needs of Muslims. If the mosques are effectively used, they will certainly become hubs of community activities.

7 On this auspicious occasion, let us re-affirm our commitment to the task of building a harmonious multi-religious and multi-racial society and to develop a style of living among Muslims based on social and religious values which are taught in the koran. As Singapore develops with increasing urbanisation and industrialisation, we would have to adjust to changes and accept the needs and requirements of our

modern society and be forward-looking at a time when the whole Muslim world is re-adjusting its outlook to meet the challenges of the times. Let us not flinch from difficulties and problems. Let us be united with our fellow citizens of different faiths so that together we can build a happy and prosperous Singapore.

8 It now remains for me to congratulate the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura and the Jurong Mosque Building Committee for the excellent arrangements made for this ceremony and for the untiring efforts to raise funds for the building of such a beautiful mosque as can be seen in the mosque model on display this morning. I am indeed pleased to officiate at this ceremony for the knocking of the first pile of the Jurong Mosque. We pray to Allah for His blessing on this mosque and on ourselves.