

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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SPEECH BY MR WONG KAN SENG, MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SECOND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY OF THE SINGAPORE INDOOR STADIUM AT CARPARK E (OPPOSITE KALLANG THEATRE) ON MONDAY, 28 DECEMBER 1987 AT 9.15 AM

We are gathered here today to witness a significant milestone in the history of sports development in Singapore - the ground breaking of the new Singapore Indoor Stadium. The Stadium will have facilities and modern equipment for regional and international games, family entertainment shows, conventions and rallies. Large video screens, retractable seating, spaces that allow ready changes to meet different usage, large loading/unloading bays and other latest features will ensure that the Stadium can be used to host a variety of events with fast turn around and minimal maintenance costs. The large capacity of 14,000 will be both an attraction and a challenge to sports promoters, impresarios and convention organisers.

The design of the Singapore Indoor Stadium will also provide opportunities for technological transfers. First of all, a local architectural firm is working closely with a leading Japanese firm on all aspects of project design, civil, structural and mechanical provisions in this specialised field.

Secondly, we have the joint venture team of a Korean construction company and a Singaporean company where an exchange of experience and technological know-how on the construction of such specialised buildings will help to raise local expertise. This is because of the unique design and construction of the roof. The roof will be assembled at

ground level and jacked into precise position by sophisticated computer techniques. Local counterparts should therefore make full use of this opportunity to update their expertise.

The existing Old Runway Road will be upgraded to serve as the main ingress and egress to the Singapore Indoor Stadium. When completed, this will substantially relieve the traffic congestions along the roads leading to the National Stadium, the Singapore Indoor Stadium, the Kallang Theatre and the other recreational facilities.

The building of the Singapore Indoor Stadium demonstrates the Government's effort and investment in providing the necessary infrastructure to meet the leisure and sporting needs of the people. The latest census on sports facilities conducted by the Singapore Sports Council shows that there are presently 529 multi-purpose halls, 442 multi-purpose fields, 316 swimming pools, 662 squash courts, 472 tennis courts and 11 athletic stadia. The Government is the chief provider of these facilities especially multi-purpose halls (82.4 per cent), multi-purpose fields (92.3 per cent), athletic stadia (100 per cent) and competition swimming pools (65.9 per cent).

To stay competitive, Singapore has to strive for excellence in every field of endeavour. With this in mind, we have decided to proceed with the construction of an Indoor Stadium of international standard. I hope the availability of this facility will inspire talented sportsmen and sportswomen into new dimensions of sports excellence.

The Singapore Sports Council, which will administer this new Indoor Stadium must work out plans to ensure that this prestigious project will not become a white elephant.

A joint committee comprising representatives of the Singapore Sports Council, National Theatre Trust, People's Association, Ministry of Community Development and other relevant organisations has been set up to map out a marketing strategy that will attract major international sports and show promoters to bring events to Singapore that will interest the people. I envisage that the Indoor Stadium will be a centre for major international tournaments and family entertainment in the 1990s.

I would like to thank all the people who are involved in this project for helping to translate a long cherished dream into reality.

It is now my great pleasure to initiate the first pile driver at this Ground-Breaking Ceremony.

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