

SAF RESERVISTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER AND SHOW

SPEECH BY DR LEE CHIAW MENG,
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

18 July, 1976

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today the SAF Reservists' Association celebrates its fourth anniversary with some 37,000 members on its membership roll. It is commendable that a voluntary organization can achieve such a large membership in so short a time.

This in no small way reflects the fact that the Association has been successful in meeting the needs of its members. The various educational classes and cultural groups organized by the Association have proved popular, as have the various sports facilities such as the squash and badminton courts. The sports tournaments and classes have also been very well attended, especially in the last two years.

This interest in sports should be encouraged, as it is important that every reservist, like any other kind of soldier, keeps himself physically fit and prepared for mobilization or for his annual service. In in-camp training stint usually lasts for only a few weeks, and the reservist cannot afford to use any of this time to try to get himself into shape at the last minute.

He would certainly find the training program less strenuous and more interesting had he been keeping himself fit during the other eleven months of the year.

To this end, SAFRA has always encouraged its members to take up sports as a pleasant way to keep fit. It even provides tuition by former state-players for those who would like to improve their skill.

So far, the response has been good, so much so that the association is finding difficulty in coping with the demand for sport facilities. During this year alone, SAFRA is setting up two more squash courts and constructing a court for paddle tennis, the first of its kind in Singapore.

Reservist welfare should not and is not limited to providing sports and social amenities alone. For example, a reservist will find it easier to get a HDB flat through the SAF and SAFRA.

In recognition of his contribution to national defence, every reservist may apply for a flat under the SAF Priority Allocation Scheme if he meets the normal conditions laid down by the HDB. Not a few reservists have SAFRA and the SAF to thank for getting their flat so quickly.

All this is aimed at making reservists more aware of their important role in our society.

Judging from the fact that the Association has had to make plans for a new clubhouse to cope with its expanding membership, I think the Association has more than achieved its aim.