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Change in Chief of Defence Force and Chief of Army

15 Jan 2010



Lieutenant-General Desmond Kuek Bak Chye, the outgoing Chief of Defence Force, has served the SAF with distinction since 1981.

National Archives of Singapore

Major-General (MG) Neo Kian Hong, currently Chief of Army, will take over from Lieutenant-General (LG) Desmond Kuek Bak Chye as Chief of Defence Force on 31 Mar 2010. Brigadier-General (BG) Chan Chun Sing, currently Chief of Staff - Joint Staff, will assume the appointment of Chief of Army on 26 Mar 2010. These changes are part of the continuing process of leadership renewal in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

Since his enlistment in 1981, LG Kuek, 46, has served the SAF with distinction. Through the course of his career, LG Kuek has held the appointments of Commanding Officer 41st Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment; Head of Defence Studies Department in the Ministry of Defence; Commander 4th Singapore Armoured Brigade; Assistant Chief of the General Staff (Operations); Commander 3rd Division; Director Joint Intelligence Directorate; Chief of Staff - General Staff; and was Chief of Army from 2003 to 2007. As Chief of

Defence Force since 23 Mar 2007, LG Kuek led the SAF's transformation into a modernised, integrated and networked fighting force, capable of carrying out a wider spectrum of operations, and manned by committed and competent people. He put in place the building blocks of the 3rd Generation SAF by transforming its force structure and developing key capabilities and systems. These initiatives have significantly enhanced the SAF's operational efficiency and combat capability to deal effectively with conventional and new security challenges. Under LG Kuek's command, the SAF actively participated in regional and global security operations, such as multilateral collaborations and peace support operations. These efforts have broadened and deepened the SAF's extensive network of defence relations with other armed forces and enhanced its international reputation as a credible, operationally ready force. Well-recognised and respected as a people-oriented leader, LG Kuek also strengthened the SAF's efforts in nurturing and engaging its people at all levels. The success of these efforts can be seen in the development of new career schemes and training programmes to enhance the professionalism and competencies of personnel to meet the demands of a 3rd Generation fighting force.

The incoming Chief of Defence Force, MG Neo, 46, joined the SAF in 1983. He was awarded the SAF (Overseas) Scholarship in 1985. MG Neo holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons 2nd Upper) (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) from King's College, UK, and a Master of Science (Management of Technology) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. In the course of his military career, MG Neo has held several key appointments, including Commander 7th Singapore Infantry Brigade; Assistant Chief of the General Staff (Operations); Commander 9th Division; Commander Army Training and Doctrine Command; and Chief of Staff - Joint Staff. As Chief of Army since 20 Mar 2007, MG Neo built a networked Army of dedicated people, equipped with cutting-edge technologies and enhanced fire power. MG Neo facilitated the Army's cooperation with other armed forces in the region through exercises and professional exchanges, and played a significant role in the SAF's participation in international peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.

The incoming Chief of Army, BG Chan Chun Sing, 40, joined the SAF in 1987 and was awarded the SAF (Overseas) and President's Scholarship in 1988. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons 1st Class) (Economics Studies) from the University of Cambridge, UK and a Master of Arts (Economics) from Christ's College, University of Cambridge, UK. He also holds a Master of Business Administration from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. His previous appointments in the SAF include Commander 10th Singapore Infantry Brigade; Head Joint Plans and Transformation Department; and Commander 9th Division and Chief Infantry Officer.

The Ministry of Defence wishes to express its deep appreciation to LG Kuek for his sterling leadership and outstanding contributions to the development of the SAF. LG Kuek will be returning to the Administrative Service.



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