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Minister for Defence Visits the Island Defence Task Force

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Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen surveying the waters surrounding Jurong Island and being briefed on top of a security tower.

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Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen visited the Island Defence Task Force (IDTF) at Jurong Island this afternoon. The visit was hosted by Chief of Army Major-General Ravinder Singh. Under the IDTF, the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) soldiers work closely with other agencies such as the Singapore Police Force, Singapore Civil Defence Force and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority to protect key installations like Changi Airport, Jurong Island and Sembawang Wharves.

During the visit, Dr Ng experienced firsthand the roles and challenges of the security troopers deployed on an observation tower and had a chance to view and handle a suite of equipment used by the IDTF. This included a Remote Bomb Disposal Robot, hand-held chemical detector, hand-held X-ray scanner, taser, Bomb Disposal Suits and Individual Protection Equipment Suits. Speaking after the visit, Dr Ng spoke about the importance of always

remaining vigilant, even during peacetime. He added that while we always had to succeed, terrorists only had to succeed once.

He said, "We want to keep Singapore safe all the time but we also want to make sure that if anything happens, we have a back-up plan. You must have the resilience to be able to respond and yet prepare yourselves so that you can always firstly prevent any of these incidences from happening to the best of your ability." The IDTF was established in 2001 when SAF soldiers were deployed to protect vital installations around Singapore to boost national security after September 11. Commander 2nd People's Defence Force Brigadier-General (BG) Lam Shiu Tong said that since then, IDTF has evolved to cope with the changing security threats.

"When the SAF first started its Protection of Installation duties in Jurong Island, we did not have the supporting infrastructure and had to devote time and resources to develop these. For example, we first had to use sandbags to set up sentry points and observation posts. Overtime, these were replaced with concrete towers equipped with closed-circuit television," explained BG Lam.



Dr Ng firing the taser at a target board.



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Dr Ng operating the Remote Bomb Disposal Robot while Commander 2nd People's Defence Force Brigadier-General Lam Shiu Tong looks on.



Dr Ng, accompanied by Chief of Army Major-General Ravinder Singh (to Dr Ng's right), interacting with men from the Island Defence Task force during a visit to Jurong Island.

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