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Record number of 47 recipients awarded prestigious MINDEF/SAF scholarships this year

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Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen interacting with the MINDEF/SAF scholars at the award ceremony at the Istana.

Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen presented The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Scholarship to seven recipients, the newly introduced SAF Engineering Scholarship to three recipients, SAF Merit Scholarship to 23 recipients as well as the Defence Merit Scholarship to 14 recipients at a scholarship awards ceremony held at the Istana this evening. Of the 47 scholarship recipients, 20 of them are females. This is the largest batch of

MINDEF/SAF scholarship recipients to date, and reflects the increased interest among young Singaporeans in contributing to Singapore's defence and security.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr Ng highlighted MINDEF/SAF's increased focus in attracting the best science and engineering talents, saying, "We are launching for the first time this year, the SAF Engineering Scholarship, for which we have three recipients. This specific Scholarship for Engineering signals the importance that the SAF gives to attract top scientists and engineers - as we do for commanders in the military, because you need both types of leaders, and these Engineering scholars are groomed to lead the Military Expert Corps. Together, they enable the SAF to be a superior force."

Dr Ng also shared on the rising trend of women SAF scholars. He said, "Another highlight is the rising trend of women SAF scholars, this in keeping with the rising proportion of women personnel in our SAF. This year, we have 20 female scholars for this ceremony, including three who have been awarded the SAF Scholarship. In essence, I think a broader pipeline has now been opened for women to contribute more to Singapore's defence. We already have women officers in wide-ranging vocations, and some now in pinnacle positions."

The SAF Scholarship was introduced in 1971, and it is a prestigious scholarship second only to the President's Scholarship. The SAF Merit Scholarship and Defence Merit Scholarship were introduced in 1983 and 2002 respectively. The SAF Engineering scholarship is a new scholarship introduced in April 2016 to attract bright young men and women with the interest and commitment to contribute to the SAF as military engineers under the Military Domain Experts Scheme (MDES).

All four scholarships aim to recruit top students from each cohort of school-leavers to join MINDEF and the SAF, and this year's scholarship recipients, who have demonstrated academic excellence and outstanding leadership qualities, will be pursuing their undergraduate studies at reputable local and overseas universities.

Upon completion of their tertiary education, recipients of the uniformed scholarships will return to the organisation to assume a variety of challenging appointments that will groom them for senior command and leadership positions in MINDEF and the SAF. The Defence Merit Scholarship recipients will return from their studies as Defence Executive Officers. They will be groomed for senior management positions in MINDEF by taking on varied job challenges to hone their skills in critical defence areas.

Present at the awards ceremony were senior officials from MINDEF and the SAF, members of the Public Service Commission, in-service scholars, school principals, as well as the invited guests of the 47 scholarship recipients.

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MINDEF/SAF Scholarship Recipients, (from left) SAF Engineering Scholar ME4(T) Ho Yan Jin, SAF Scholar MID Danyon Low Ming Loon, SAF Merit Scholar 2LT Vijeykannen Ng Hu Yan S/O Vijayaratnam, SAF Merit Scholar MID Sheryl Ng Ke En, SAF Merit Scholar LTA Jordan Martin Millar, Defence Merit Scholar Ko..

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