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# PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR ABDULLAH TARMUGI  
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND MINISTER-IN-CHARGE OF MUSLIM AFFAIRS  
AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF  
MOULANA MOHD ALI MOSQUE  
AT UNITED OVERSEAS BANK (UOB) PLAZA,  
BASEMENT 1  
ON SUNDAY 31 MARCH 1996 AT 6.00 PM**

Alhamdulillah, with the blessings of Allah Almighty, this new Moulana Mohd Ali Mosque is now ready to serve the Muslims working within the city area.

The history of Moulana Mohd Ali Mosque went as far back as in late 1970s when it was originally located in a pair of double-storey pre-war shop-houses at Market Street. The surrounding area was acquired for urban redevelopment and the expansion plan of the United Overseas Bank. The Muslim League which ran the mosque then together with Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) had planned to relocate the mosque to a new site. I understand few alternative sites were offered for the new mosque.

With the grace of Allah, MUIS, the Muslim League and the UOB reached an agreement in Jun 82 to relocate the mosque at the basement of UOB Plaza, one of the highrise banking towers in the heart of the Central Business District in exchange for the old mosque. The location and surroundings of this new mosque make it very unique. It is located on prime land and within a prestigious commercial development. Furthermore, it is not surrounded by housing estates but instead with multi-million dollar highrise office towers.

Hence, the congregation of this mosque will also differ from those in mosques in the satellite towns. The worshippers in this mosque will, most probably, be more multi-racial.

The challenge now faced by the mosque management committee is how to enhance the unique characteristics of the mosque with equally suitable programmes to cater to the needs of the Muslim workers of different ethnic groups and cultures with different professional backgrounds. It will probably have to move away from the traditional activities held in mosques in Housing & Development Board (HDB) estates. Even the sermons in this mosque may have to be adapted to a more multi-lingual congregation. This speech in English is indeed in recognition of this mosque's unique position.

Because of this unique position, the mosque could play a unique role. The mosque committee, for instance could consider setting up a library or reading room of sorts where materials on Islam in various languages can be found. This facility will be useful to Muslims who do not read Malay or Arabic but wish to know more about the religion or follow its development in their own or a more common language. Non-Muslims too could take advantage of this facility to get a better understanding of Islam and, in the process, hopefully, dispelling the myths and misunderstandings on the religion.

Finally I would like to congratulate the Muslim League and the members of the Moulana Mohd Ali Mosque Management Committee in successfully rebuilding the mosque at this new site. Only Allah can adequately recompense their time, energy and commitment spent on overseeing the rebuilding and management of this mosque.

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