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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information and the Arts, #36-00 PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 119963. Tel: 3757794/5

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ADDENDA TO PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

& INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

MR YEOW CHEOW TONG

Minister for Communications

and Information Technology

1. Information and communications technology (ICT) will drive and shape the world economy in the next century. We must respond quickly and take on the challenge of this digital wave to become a key ICT centre. ICT is both a key growth sector and an enabler for business, education and other sectors. We must also maintain our global standing in the maritime and aviation sectors. In land transport, we must build a world class transport system, maximise the use of public transport and ensure a smooth flow of traffic on the roads.

Information and Communications Technology

2. To be a key ICT centre, we need to be globally competitive in IT and

communications.

3. The global telecommunications industry is undergoing dramatic changes in technology, in industry restructuring and in deregulation. To keep pace with these changes, we have shortened the monopoly period for SingTel's public basic telecommunications services licence by 7 years to end in the year 2000. We will deregulate across the entire range of services, and develop a vibrant and globally competitive communications sector. Our priority is to ensure high quality services at competitive prices, especially as communications charges are a major cost factor for knowledge-based services. We must be connected to the key communication nodes in the world, with sufficient bandwidth. Our policies will take into account the rapid convergence in digital technologies, so that innovative ideas and new services can be rapidly brought into the market.

4. The field of IT is also extremely dynamic, with strong growth in internet businesses and e-commerce. Notwithstanding our current strength in Asia, we must push aggressively forward, as our competitors are not standing still. We will ensure that our policy and business environment will attract IT businesses to hub their Asian, if not global operations in Singapore. As ICT is a knowledge industry that hinges on talent, we will work with the industry and educational institutions to provide the sector with sufficient trained personnel.

5. MCIT is working with the ICT community to formulate the ICT21 Masterplan. Our vision is to transform Singapore into a vibrant global ICT capital with a thriving and prosperous Net Economy by the year 2010.

6. To achieve this, we seek to achieve a number of key objectives in the ICT21 Masterplan:

a. to develop the ICT sector as the key growth sector in Singapore's economy.

b. to use ICT as a common platform to boost the performance of Singapore's knowledge-based economy; and

c. to leverage on ICT to enhance the quality of life and standard of living of Singaporeans in the Information Society.

Air Transport

7. Changi Airport expects to handle about 25 million passengers in 1999. While this will mark a return to pre-crisis levels, challenges remain in the aviation sector. For example, the growing trend of airline alliances and close co-operation among airlines will pose new operational demands in terms of airport facilities and services. Other challenges include increasing regional airport competition and the greater use of IT in various facets of aviation. Changi Airport must improve its services and expand and upgrade its facilities and infrastructure. Projects such as the on-going expansion of Terminal 1, the construction of the MRT station and Terminal 3 will help Changi Airport maintain its competitive edge.

Sea Transport

8. Although Singapore has retained its position as the busiest port in the world, PSA can expect much fiercer competition from other countries and ports. We will upgrade our port facilities and services to meet the challenges of the new millennium. Our ports will continually seek ways to increase their productivity and provide value-for-money services as part of an integrated logistics chain. We will develop Singapore into an international logistics hub. Where and when appropriate, port and marine services will be further liberalised to maintain our competitive edge. We will publicly list PSA in a few years' time when conditions permit. We will also develop the auxiliary maritime services to make Singapore a leading International Maritime Centre.

Land Transport

9. We will develop a world class land transport system which provides commuters efficient, comfortable and convenient rides in congestion-free traffic. The backbone of the public transport system will be the Rapid Transit System (RTS). We will expand the RTS network into a comprehensive network, doubling the current network of 83 km within the next 10 years. The 20-km North East MRT Line will be completed in 2002.

10. Public transport operators will offer multi-modal services to provide commuters with an integrated public transport system. Bukit Panjang will soon have the country's first Light-Rail Transit system. Sengkang and Punggol residents will also enjoy integrated rail-bus services in a few years time.

11. We will give emphasis to better land use and transport planning, expanding the road network, managing the population and usage of vehicles and demand for road space, and improving public transport.

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ADDENDA TO PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

AND THE ARTS

MR LEE YOCK SUAN

Minister for Information and The Arts

1. MITA will develop build Singapore as a vibrant global city for information and the arts, whilst enhancing our Singaporean identity and multi-cultural heritage.

Arts

2. The National Arts Council (NAC) will focus on promoting artistic excellence and developing our arts groups. It will encourage and commission more local works.
3. NAC will also reach out to more schools and students under the Arts Education Programme. It will work with schools and arts groups to enhance arts education in schools.
4. The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay will be completed in 2002. It will attract and present world-class performing arts events as well as local and other arts performances to cater to all Singaporeans.
5. MITA will promote the Singapore Arts Festival as a premier international arts event, with an Asian flavour. We will also support our arts groups and artists performing overseas as our cultural ambassadors.

6. The Singapore Film Commission will promote the local film industry. It will nurture local talent in film-making, promote co-production between local and international film-makers, and encourage regional filmmakers to do some of their productions in Singapore.

Library

7. The number of visitors to our public libraries has tripled, and the number of loans has doubled over the last four years. We will promote reading and lifelong learning and provide Singaporeans with better access to library facilities and resources.

National Archives of Singapore

8. In the next five years, the National Library Board (NLB) will build four more community libraries, and an additional regional library at Woodlands. In addition, the new National Library Building is expected to be ready in 2004. Five times larger than the current library at Stamford Road, it will house an extensive collection of books and offer a range of services to facilitate continual self-improvement and lifelong learning.

9. The NLB is also forging partnerships with major libraries around the world to give Singaporeans easy access to library resources world-wide.

Heritage

10. The Singapore History Museum (SHM) will be renovated and expanded to present a more comprehensive history of Singapore. When ready in 2002, the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) at Empress Place will complement the facilities and

exhibits of the ACM at the former Tao Nan School.

Information

11. Rapid developments in technology have enabled Singaporeans to have greater and easier access to information, particularly through the Internet. This will impinge on every aspect of life, including economic, social and political matters. We will study the implications of these trends for Singapore.
12. Broadcasting in Singapore is poised to enter the digital age, following the adoption of digital standards for audio and terrestrial broadcasts. We will develop digital broadcasting services (Digital Audio Broadcast and Digital TV) and enhance our position as a broadcasting hub.
13. Three new radio stations and a new TV station were launched in the last two years - NewsRadio 93.8, InterFM 96.3, Passion 99.5, and Channel NewsAsia. Next year, the Media Corporation of Singapore will provide a new sports channel, a Malay channel and more air time for Indian programmes.
14. Singapore Cable Vision (SCV) today offers Singaporeans up to 38 different TV channels on its pay-TV services and high speed Internet on its cable modem services. We will progressively open up the market to other services after the exclusivity clause in SCV's licence expires in June 2002. We will introduce rules to require foreign transmissions through SCV and other services with significant local impact to observe the same standards as those imposed on local broadcasters.
15. Singapore is fast growing in stature as a media hub. More and more international media organisations have set up regional offices, uplinking and production facilities here. We will work with media organisations to facilitate their operations here.

Speak Good English Campaign

16. MITA will work with MOE and other relevant agencies to launch an annual Speak Good English Campaign from 2000 to promote the use of standard English.

The Singapore Heartbeat

17. We will strengthen the Singapore Heartbeat - a symbol of our emotional attachment to Singapore - and help to build a Singapore that is home to all Singaporeans. Through the Singapore International Foundation, we will build up our network with overseas Singaporean clubs and promote a sense of Singaporean consciousness among their members.

ADDENDA TO PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (PUBLIC SERVICE DIVISION)

BG LEE HSIEN LOONG

Deputy Prime Minister

Building a First Class Public Service

1. A capable, forward-looking and effective Public Service, working with the elected Government, is critical to support a successful and vibrant Singapore in the 21st century.
2. In turn, the quality of the Public Service depends on the quality of its people. Bold, astute and dynamic leadership in the public sector is essential. Our personnel management system will attract the best and the brightest, give each individual a fulfilling career in serving the nation, and maximise the potential and contribution of each public officer. We will continuously review our tools for recruiting, assessing, developing and compensating our officers to ensure superior public leadership. In line with PS21, we will encourage public officers to be "activists for change". The Public Service will be open to change, and be nimble and flexible in adapting to change.
3. In addition, to sustain excellence across the entire public service, PSD and MOF are jointly developing the Managing for Excellence (MFE) framework. We will define key processes and share good practices to facilitate the agencies' efforts towards organisational excellence. We will benchmark public agencies against national standards such as ISO 9000, People Developer Award and Singapore Quality Award.
4. Quality Service Management is a key process under the MFE framework. To meet the rising expectations for quality and excellence in the delivery of public services, we will conduct regular customers' surveys to assess their expectations and perceptions of the public service. This will help determine critical priorities and features to be incorporated into the service delivery policies.

Toward Active Citizenship

5. In the 21st century, our society will be more educated and sophisticated. Our problems will be more complex. While strong government and responsible leadership remain essential for Singapore, the Public Service will not be able to address all these problems on its own.

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6. The Public Service will play its part towards attaining the goal of "active citizenship" where Singaporeans actively contribute their ideas, time and energy to build a better Singapore. The Public Service will consult the Private and People sectors more, in order to obtain feedback, tap their specialised knowledge and ensure smoother implementation of government's policies. The Public Service will also seek the active involvement of the Private and People sectors as partners in implementing policies to further the overall interests of Singapore. The Public Service will be more open and transparent, and more adept at explaining government policies to the general public.

Training and Development in the Public Service

7. The Public Service has set a target for every officer to achieve at least 100 hours of training a year by the year 2000. Civil Service College through its training arms - the Institute of Policy Development (IPD) and the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM) - will continuously review its training programmes to support national and public sector initiatives. It will build linkages with foreign institutions and foreign civil services to tap a world-wide pool of expertise in civil service leadership and training matters. In addition, the Civil Service College will provide courses to equip civil servants with the skills required in a society of active Singapore citizens.

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