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PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR PHUA BAH LEE, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(DEFENCE), AT THE FLAGGING-OFF OF THE SAP RESERVISTS'
ASSOCIATION (SAFRA) 25 KM MASS ROAD RELAY
AT WEST ENTRANCE, NATIONAL STADIUM
ON SUNDAY, 19 AUGUST 1984 AT 8.00 AM**

I am happy to see so many of you taking part in this 25 km Mass Road Relay to celebrate our 25 years of nation building. As reservists, you will continue to bear the critical responsibility of protecting our present and future society. Only with the defence of Singapore assured can we continue to enjoy economic growth and prosperity. And since to be physically fit and rugged is fundamental to every effective reservist soldier, Mindef and SAFRA are carrying out various measures to encourage fitness and sporting activities.

In the past, SAFRA was keen to form teams to compete in various tournaments even at National level. This was aimed at encouraging reservists to participate actively in all competitive sports to enhance team spirit, camaraderie and physical fitness. However, SAFRA would like to see more reservists come forward to join in the games and sports organised for them. By regularly participating in these sporting activities, it will help the individual reservist to build up stamina and better prepare himself to face the stiff endurance test conducted in in-camp trainings.

One of SAFRA's main objectives would be to win the hearts and minds of our reservists to participate in its fitness and sports programmes. Mindef wants its reservists to keep themselves fit throughout the year. SAFRA can help by specifically offering help to those who find their IPPT (Individual Physical Proficiency Test) a problem. SAFRA can

continue to restructure its activities to embrace the critical role of training reservists to pass their IPPTs. This 25 km Mass Road Relay is relevant in that it encourages reservists to train for a purpose. Each reservist needs to run 2.5 km which is slightly more than the 2.4 km for IPPT. If reservists practised hard for this and continue to take part in SAFRA's fitness and sporting activities, they are actually training themselves for their IPPTs.

Instead of focussing only on sports teams to capture glories at tournaments, SAFRA will now provide more opportunities for reservists in general to enjoy friendly competitions and mass events.

Our surveys have shown that our reservists preferred activities that have the least fuss. That is why they prefer to swim, jog, play racket games, shop or watch television.

Let alone, people prefer to laze around on weekends. We need peer pressure to encourage participation in most activities. All it takes is getting people who are interested to 'push' those who are lethargic.

If only our reservists would come out to participate in every fitness and sporting activity organised by SAFRA, People's Association and Residents' Committees, we would have so many more active and fit reservists; so many more successful events and much more optimum use of our resources.

The challenge for SAFRA is how it can motivate this inactive group to respond positively; plan the activities they prefer and encourage their participation. The SAF-SAFRA Partnership Programme is initiating this challenge. The activities lined up this year have been suggested by some reservist volunteers and they are and will be helping in the organisation. But ultimately this success depends upon the reservists and their families wanting to come forward. I have no doubt that they would come out to support us.

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