

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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**SPEECH BY MR TEH CHEANG WAN, MINISTER FOR
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF
THE SINGAPORE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS (SIA)
AT THE MANDARIN BALLROOM, MANDARIN HOTEL
ON FRIDAY, 24 JUNE 1983 AT 7.15 PM**

It is a pleasure for my wife and I to be here tonight to attend your Annual Dinner.

The decade of the 80s will go down in history as the most important decade in the physical development of Singapore. In the last few years, we have already seen the completion of the new Changi International Airport, and the East Coast Parkway Viaduct. For the next part of the decade, we shall see the implementation of even more spectacular construction projects - that of the Mass Rapid Transit system and the Marina Bay development.

After ten years of intensive study involving several teams of foreign experts, the Government has finally decided to proceed with the \$5 billion MRT project. The importance of this project to the development of Singapore cannot be over-emphasized. Besides catering for the transportation needs of the population, the MRT will also shape the physical development of Singapore for at least the next 50 years. The locations of the MRT stations will determine the areas of future commercial developments, while the alignment of the MRT routes will influence the areas of intensive residential and other developments.

Of equal importance will be the development of Marina Bay. The Marina Bay is situated at a unique location. It is flanked by the the new hotel and commercial complex at Marina Centre, the existing business district of Raffles Place and Shenton Way, and the historical Government centre of the City Hall, High Court, Parliament House, Empress Place and the Padang. By carefully merging the developments at Marina South with that of the surrounding, we can create the most impressive ideal city centre around the Marina Bay.

When its development is completed, the Marina Bay area will be the new focal point of Singapore. Its importance to Singapore will be the same as that of the Statue of Liberty to New York, the Arc de Triomphe along Champs Elysee to Paris, and the British Parliament House with the Big Ben at the banks of River Thames to London. It will express the identity of the new Singapore.

The Marina Bay area will not be another commercial downtown where all activities cease in the evening. It will be planned to be a lively city centre. During the day, it will be bustling with commercial activities. At night, it will be thronged with tourists and shoppers like the Orchard Road today.

The tourists and the local population will be attracted to the area by its excellent hotels and shopping complexes, scenic surroundings and easy accessibility. More hotel rooms will be built in the Marina Bay area than the whole of Orchard Road combined. These hotels, being better designed and equipped, will be superior to those in Orchard Road. The area will also be a shoppers' paradise with many huge and prestigious shopping complexes. Accessibility will be provided by the MRT and a good network of

expressways and roads. In addition, a beautiful Esplanade will be developed along the banks of Marina Bay. This Esplanade which will be of a grander scale than the existing Queen Elizabeth Walk will be several kilometres long. At the Esplanade, visitors will have a magnificent view of the cityscape and reflections of tall buildings cast on the calm waters of the Bay. With such a scenic setting, the Marina Bay area will no doubt be the most desirable place for recreation and gathering in future.

Besides the MRT and Marina Bay, we shall also see the most extensive construction programmes for public housing, hotels and commercial complexes, etc. Indeed, the decade will be the golden era of architecture in Singapore. As architects, you can be congratulated for having such opportunities to express your talent and creativity, and of course, to collect handsome consultancy fees.

I am in full agreement with the remark made by your President that the architecture profession in Singapore has matured. The local architects, both in the private or public sector, have designed buildings of international standards. It is therefore my sincere hope that the architects, together with the allied professionals, will attain greater professional expertise and excellence by further organising themselves into large international consulting firms. This would go a long way in helping to achieve the Government's objective of developing Singapore into a brain centre.

On this note, I would like to wish you and your Institute every success.

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