

# PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT WEE KIM WEE  
AT THE BOYS' BRIGADE NATIONAL DAY 1987 THANKSGIVING  
CARNIVAL AT BOYS' BRIGADE HQ, COVENT GARDEN  
ON SATURDAY, 22 AUGUST 1987 AT 2.30 PM**

My wife and I are very happy to join you this afternoon to celebrate National Day. The Boys' Brigade (BB) has traditionally celebrated National Day with a Thanksgiving Service and Parade. This year's celebration, however, is different and heart-warming. Your organisation has chosen to observe the occasion of thanksgiving by playing hosts to our less fortunate fellow citizens, that they may share the National Day spirit and enjoy an afternoon of good food and fun. A service and parade would have been easier to organise. You have worked very hard since January to organise this Thanksgiving Carnival. I would like to commend everyone involved for this fine effort.

Encouraging the spirit of community service is a hallmark of The Boys' Brigade. The Brigade came into being in 1883 in Scotland as a response to the need to engage boys in purposeful activity during their free time. In Singapore, 104 years later and 11,000 kilometres away, that need is just as relevant. The Boys' Brigade programme promotes the all-round development of boys in four aspects, namely spiritual, physical, educational and social. Personal development of the boys includes leading them to care for others and to be good citizens of Singapore. BB activities, therefore, include civil defence training, community service and citizenship classes.

I am pleased to learn that The Boys' Brigade programme is continually being developed to meet challenges facing young Singaporeans. One step in the right direction is that the Brigade Executive is considering what further assistance and encouragement can be given to Brigade Companies to make their community service more effective and meaningful. At the same time, the citizenship curriculum is being reviewed to give more emphasis on national education and to enable Companies to conduct it more effectively.

The Boys' Brigade plays an important nation-building role in Singapore and has the support of the Government. The Ministry of Education awards the Brigade a small per capita annual grant and actively encourages the formation of BB Companies in schools. Most of all, The Brigade is able to count on many loyal and dedicated old boys, who are now good citizens eager to promote goodwill among fellow compatriots.

Starting with 40 boys in the 1st Company in 1930, there are today 3,600 boys in 39 Companies. Though traditionally church-based, there are now 18 Companies in government schools. I share with your Executive the hope that The Boys' Brigade will continue to grow from strength to strength so that when you celebrate, in 1990, its Diamond Jubilee, there will be at least 60 Companies and 6,000 boys.

On this note, it is my great pleasure to declare open The Boys' Brigade National Day Thanksgiving Carnival.

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