



PRESS RELEASE

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S\$30 MILLION INFUSION TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY HERITAGE INSTITUTIONS

- *Government to provide funding of S\$29 million with the community raising S\$1 million to enhance the Institutions' offerings to the public*

Singapore, 11 March 2009 - The National Heritage Board (NHB) today signed three memorandums of understanding (MOU) which sealed a new framework of enhanced support for three community heritage institutions – the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC), the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) and the upcoming Indian Heritage Centre (IHC).

Under the framework, the Government will provide funding amounting to S\$29 million, with the community raising about S\$1 million, to help fund the centres' development costs. In addition, the NHB will assist in offering its management and professional expertise to these centres in areas such as operations, curatorial support, programming direction, marketing and promotions. A new division within NHB, the Heritage Institutions Division, has also been set up to assist in the management and operation of the community heritage institutions.

"Today's MOUs underscore our commitment to further invest in our multicultural heritage with a new framework of support. The community heritage institutions play an important role in documenting the history of the various communities in Singapore. They add a new dimension to the understanding and appreciation of our collective heritage," said RAdm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew, Senior Minister of State for Education, and Information, Communications and the Arts, who witnessed the signing ceremony.

As part of a strategy to develop Singapore's cultural institutions and strategically enhance the overall heritage landscape, NHB will be working closely with the local

communities to reposition the selected heritage institutions as focal points for the Chinese, Malay and Indian diasporas. In so doing, the institutions will enhance the multi-cultural landscape in Singapore, commemorate the contributions of our local communities, and highlight Singapore's links with the region. Benefits expected from this initiative include deeper appreciation and understanding of heritage amongst Singaporeans, and a stronger sense of bonding, rootedness and multi-cultural awareness.

The institutions will continue to be led by the various communities in Singapore, represented by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Foundation for the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, the Malay Heritage Foundation for the Malay Heritage Centre, and the various committees leading the development of the Indian Heritage Centre. Thus, the overall ownership of the institutions will still be rooted in the community, and they will help to shape the vision, mission, strategies and goals of each centre.

NHB's involvement will enable operational synergies and leverage on the Board's experience in running Singapore's national museums. Curation and exhibition support will tap on the expertise of the NHB's specialists. The NHB will also integrate the three institutions into its corporate marketing and publicity efforts.

For a start, two senior NHB staff have been identified to provide curatorial support. Ms Lee Chor Lin, Director, National Museum of Singapore, will advise on the curating of exhibits for the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall and Malay Heritage Centre. Dr. Gauri Krishnan, Senior Curator, from the Asian Civilisations Museum will be in-charge of the IHC's museum developments.

Starting next year, Singaporeans will witness the start of construction for the Indian Heritage Centre in Little India as well as the revamp of Malay Heritage Centre and the rejuvenation of Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall where improvements will be made to the exhibitions to raise it to the standards of our National Museums. The

improvements are expected to be completed in between 2010 to 2011. There will also be better programming to engage and sustain interest from the community at large.

NHB will ensure a clear distinction of the themes between the national museums and the community heritage institutions. These institutions will be oriented to the respective communities and complement the existing national museums by providing follow-on experiences for the public to gain deeper insights to Singapore's multicultural heritage.

For background information on the Malay Heritage Centre, Indian Heritage Centre and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, please refer to **Annex A**.

About National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) champions the development and promotion of a vibrant cultural and heritage sector in Singapore. It makes heritage enriching, relevant and accessible to all through staging innovative programmes and forging collaborative partnerships with both private and people sector counterparts. NHB leverages on state-of-the-art technology and refreshing new approaches to make heritage more dynamic, alive and exciting for different audiences. It also manages both national and public museums, the National Archives of Singapore, and the Heritage Conservation Centre. NHB was formed on 1 August 1993 as a statutory board under the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA).

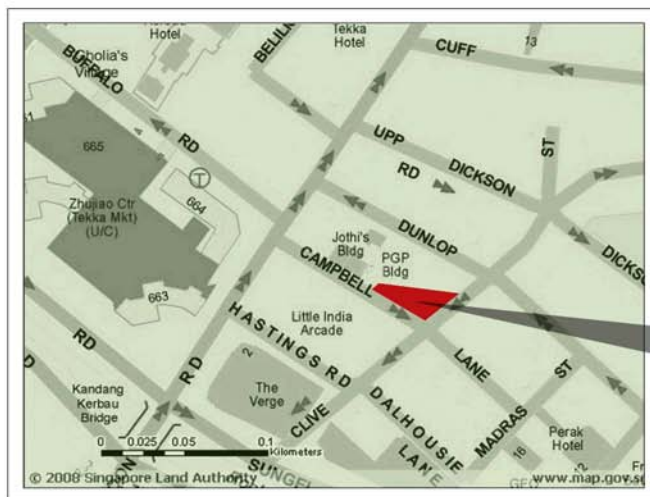
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About the Indian Heritage Centre

Indian Heritage Centre



Site Plan



Site Photos

Site of future Indian Heritage Centre

The proposed five-storey Indian Heritage Centre (IHC) will be located in the heart of Little India Conservation District at the junction of Clive Street and Campbell Lane. It will feature the history of Singapore's diverse Indian community as well as Singapore's links to India and the Indian Diaspora.

30 key committee members have been appointed to the Steering Committee and three Sub-Committees to spearhead its development. The Steering Committee is chaired by Dr. Balaji Sadasivan, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other members hail from diverse fields such as business, banking, philanthropy, law, academia, media, as well as the Indian community. Collectively, they will bring extensive experience and considerable influence to develop an IHC as an institution of excellence and centre of pride for the Indian community.

The completion and launch of the Indian Heritage Centre is slated for end 2012.

About the Malay Heritage Centre



Front view of the Malay Heritage Centre as the sun sets (photo courtesy of Malay Heritage Centre)

Located in the heart of Kampong Glam at 85 Sultan Gate, the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) houses nine galleries which showcase the roots, culture, history and heritage of Singapore Malays. The artefacts, multi-media displays and dioramas bring to life the stories of the Singapore Malays from the days of the earlier settlers. A gazette national monument, the MHC was officially opened by PM Lee Hsien Loong in June 2005.

Through its programmes, which include over 1000 activities annually, the MHC presents various aspects of Malay culture, including the rich traditions and customs, the performing and visual arts, and even its cuisine. Currently, the MHC receives 120,000 visitors annually, some 10% to 15% being tourists.

The Istana Kampong Glam is the historic seat of the Malay royalty of Singapore. Sultan Hussein (of the Johore-Riau Sultanate) built his palace or Istana in an extensive compound. Located at entrance of Istana Kampong Gelam, the Gedung Kuning was, for many years, known as the Bendahara House (Minister's House). The district itself was a flourishing centre in the 19 and early 20th centuries with Arab textile merchants, Bugis seafarers, Minangkabau and Javanese food vendors. In short it was a microcosm of Malay society and people.

In 1999, the Malay Heritage Foundation (*Yayasan Warisan Melayu*) was formed to undertake the task of developing the Centre and currently oversees its management. The present chairman of the Malay Heritage Foundation is Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Mayor, North East District.

Since its opening, the MHC has also received important dignitaries from the region like HRH Crown Princess of Brunei and the Indonesian First Lady.

About the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (*Wan Qing Yuan*)



Front view of the Hall (Photo courtesy of Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall)

Located at 12 Tai Gin Road, the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH), formerly known Sun Yat Sen Villa, has to date focused on commemorating the life and activities of the pioneer of modern Chinese Revolution, Dr. Sun Yat Sen. Some 476 rare historical pictures are exhibited in the six galleries. Also on display are oil paintings by various famous artists, bronze sculptures and life-sized wax figures that depict how Dr. Sun conducted meetings at the Hall.

Built in 1900, the double-storey bungalow was subsequently acquired by Mr Teo Eng Hock, a rubber magnate, years later. Teo was a fervent supporter of the Chinese revolutionary cause and offered the place to Dr Sun Yat Sen for his revolutionary activities in 1906. In 1937, the villa was acquired by six Chinese community leaders, who offered the place to the Chinese Nanjing Republican Government in 1938. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI), respecting the role Singaporeans (and especially the Chinese business community) played in supporting Dr Sun, took over as its trustee and revamped the villa. The current President of SCCCI is Mr Chua Thian Poh. The villa was gazetted as a national monument in 1994 in recognition of its historical significance. It was re-named Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) in 1996 to recognize the contribution of the *Nanyang* (Southeast Asian) people.

Since its restoration, the SYSNMH has seen distinguished visitors from Taiwan and PRC. The former include former KMT Chairman Lien Chan, KMT Vice Chairman Chiang Pin-kung, Legislative Yuan President Wang Jin-pyng. The latter include National People's Congress Chairman Wu Bangguo, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, and Hu Jintao's wife Mdm Liu Yongqing, amongst others.