



**National
Heritage
Board**



MEDIA RELEASE

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EXPERIENCE HERITAGE ON YOUR WAY TO WORK, HOME OR PLAY

Transformation of two overhead pedestrian bridges into heritage galleries keeps heritage close to hearts of the Balestier and Kampong Gelam precincts

Singapore, 22 March 2011 – Residents and visitors to Balestier and Kampong Gelam will now be able to relive the rich history and heritage of these heartland precincts at a public space they least expect to – overhead pedestrian bridges.

2 A community outreach initiative driven by the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) and Malay Heritage Centre (MHC), heritage institutions managed by the National Heritage Board (NHB), the Balestier and Kampong Gelam heritage bridges will complement the experiences provided by the heritage institutions, and help raise the public's awareness about the heritage of the areas in which they live, work and play.

3 The Balestier and Kampong Gelam Heritage Bridges will be launched on 22 March 2011 by Mr Baey Yam Keng, Member of Parliament for Tanjong Pagar GRC, and Ms Denise Phua, Member of Parliament for Jalan Besar GRC, respectively.

4 With support from partners such as the Building and Construction Authority, Land Transport Authority and Urban Redevelopment Authority, existing public spaces are transformed to bring heritage closer to the people. The Balestier heritage bridge, linking Balestier Hill Shopping Centre and Thomson Medical Centre, will capture on panels iconic landmarks located in the Balestier area such as the Maha Sasana Ramsi Burmese Buddhist Temple, Goh Chor Tua Pek Kong Temple and SYSNMH. Similarly, the Kampong Gelam heritage bridge, connecting Suntec City with Nicoll Highway, will feature popular landmarks within the Kampong Gelam precinct such as the Sultan Mosque and MHC. Both pedestrian bridges were chosen for their accessibility and high traffic flow.

5 “The Kampong Gelam heritage bridge is an excellent example of how learning about one's heritage can be made convenient by transforming a public space into an educational gallery that showcases the vibrant heritage and culture of Kampong Gelam,” says Ms Denise Phua.

6 Aside from key historical landmarks, both heritage bridges will also provide interesting insights into the past through old pictures and little-known historical anecdotes. For example, did you know that Balestier is also known as the “Street of Lights”, and is a melting pot of cultures featuring the Chinese, Myanmar and

Malays? Or that Kampong Gelam was once a vibrant trading port for traders in the 19th and early 20th centuries?

7 “With the two new heritage bridges, there are now more public spaces around Singapore transformed into functional areas for the arts and heritage. In the near future, perhaps more Singaporeans will get to experience a piece of history outside the traditional walls of a museum or gallery,” says Mr Baey Yam Keng.

8 Mr Alvin Tan, Director of Heritage Institutions, NHB adds: “We hope the Balestier and Kampong Gelam heritage bridges will better connect residents and visitors to the heritage of the two areas. Together with the SYSNMH and MHC, the heritage bridges will showcase two heartland areas well known for their rich history and old-world charm. In addition, the heritage bridges will liven up an otherwise mundane walk, and perhaps even encourage passers-by to take a step out of their usual routes to explore a historical landmark or two.”

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About the 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 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, the Preservation of Monuments Board 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). Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.

About the Malay Heritage Centre

Officially opened in June 2005, the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) provides wonderful cultural exposure and community learning opportunities for visitors of all ages and interests. It acts as a vital place for the Malay community in Singapore by honouring the past, and providing a means for present-day expression, nurturing talents and building resources for the future.

About the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall

The Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH), a heritage institution under the National Heritage Board, traces Dr Sun's revolutionary activities in the Southeast Asian region and highlights the impact of the 1911 Chinese Revolution on Singapore as well as Singapore's contributions to the Revolution. Today, the memorial hall is home to a collection of photos, paintings, calligraphy works and sculptures.

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