

**MEDIA RELEASE**

***Embargoed till 16 April, noon***

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AT EMPRESS PLACE CONCLUDES WITH  
2.5 TONNES OF ARTEFACTS UNEARTHED**



**SINGAPORE, 16 April 2015** – After two months of excavation works, the archaeological excavation at Empress Place, the largest ever conducted in Singapore, is successfully completed with a yield of an estimated two and a half tonnes of artefacts.

2 The archaeological excavation, organised by the National Heritage Board (NHB) in partnership with the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (NSC-ISEAS), commenced on 2 February 2015 with the support of the Urban Redevelopment Authority. While the excavation is part of NHB's efforts to commemorate over 30 years of archaeology in Singapore, NHB also hopes that the excavation will uncover artefacts that date from the Temasek period to Singapore's early colonial days so as to enhance our understanding of Singapore's early beginnings.



3 The main excavation works officially concluded on 12 April 2015. The significant artefacts uncovered include two sets of timber features – the first of its kind recovered in Singapore, a gold coin, and rare Buddhist figurines which could provide valuable insights into the religious and cultural practices of the past. For more information on the list of significant artefacts recovered from the excavation, please refer to **Annex A**.

4 Mr Alvin Tan, Assistant Chief Executive Officer (Policy & Development), said, “With the Empress Place excavation, we have hit the archaeological jackpot in terms of the quantity and quality of recovered artefacts. Now that the excavation works have been completed, Singaporeans can look forward to viewing some of the more significant artefacts at our museums once the necessary cataloguing and research work are completed.”

5 NSC-ISEAS will proceed to clean and catalogue the recovered artefacts, and conduct further research on them. Research material gleaned will be used in NHB’s assessment of the artefacts. The historically significant ones will be accessioned into the National Collection and/or made available for display at our museums and/or exhibitions.

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### **About the National Heritage Board**

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore’s heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit. NHB’s mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is now a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg](http://www.nhb.gov.sg) for more information.



### **About the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies**

The Archaeology Unit (AU) was formed in 2010 and pursues projects designed to foster collaborative research in the archaeology of civilization in Southeast Asia, and its links with its neighbours in Asia. It is a part of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. In Singapore the AU conducts excavations concentrating on the material culture of the period from 1300 to 1600, but also maintains an interest in the lives of Singapore's inhabitants during the colonial period of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The AU also collaborates with institutions in the Asia and Pacific regions to conduct research and training, and to disseminate reports on archaeological research. Please visit <http://www.iseas.edu.sg/archaeology-unit.cfm> for more information.

**LIST OF SIGNIFICANT ARTEFACTS RECOVERED FROM THE EMPRESS PLACE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

1. Timber Planks
2. Gold Wire Rings & Gold Coin
3. Chinese Copper Coins
4. Erotic Porcelain
5. Longquan Imperial Wares (Platter and Censer)
6. Stone Tools
7. Buddhist Figurines
8. Fujian Greenware Bowl
9. Brown Glazed Stoneware Jar
10. Stoneware Jarlets
11. Blue & White Porcelain
12. Dzi Type Beads
13. Earthenware Animal Figurine
14. Locally & Malay Type Earthenware
15. Whiteware Porcelain Dish & Cups

Note: The following artefacts have a date range of between c.1300s and 1650s.