

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE PADANG TO BE OFFICIALLY GAZETTED AS SINGAPORE'S 75TH NATIONAL MONUMENT ON 9 AUGUST 2022



The Padang is a key landmark in the Civic District, and stands out amidst the colonial buildings around it and Singapore's commercial core to its south-west.

Credit line: National Heritage Board

Singapore, 8 August 2022 – The Padang will be officially gazetted as Singapore's 75th National Monument on 9 August 2022, making it the first green, open space to join the country's list of National Monuments. The iconic site is a social and community space that has borne witness to many significant national events, and today, continues to serve as a venue for recreation and sporting events. In view of its strong national, historical and social significance, the Padang will be preserved and accorded the highest level of protection in Singapore under the Preservation of Monuments Act. With the gazette, the character and appearance of the Padang will be preserved for future generations, while ensuring all current uses can continue.

2 The gazette was officiated by Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, who was present to preview some of the commemorative initiatives which will be launched in conjunction with the gazette. Minister Tong said, "The Padang will be the first green, open space to join our list of National Monuments. Together with our 74 other National Monuments, it preserves and celebrates the stories that define Singapore and our people. Generations of people have gathered here and witnessed key milestones in Singapore's history. It stands as a testament to Singapore's historical journey, anchoring our Singaporean identity and reflecting our place in

the world. The gazette of the Padang as a National Monument will protect it, as it is now, from alteration and change which would affect its character and significance, while allowing it to continue to be a social and community space enjoyed by Singaporeans.”

The Padang and its significance

3 The Padang stands out amidst the other edifices surrounding it in the Civic District as well as the larger commercial core of the city centre in its south-west. It has been retained as an open green space despite the many development changes in its vicinity since Singapore’s colonial days. It is also bordered by several National Monuments all around its perimeter – the Cenotaph, Lim Bo Seng Memorial, Tan Kim Seng Fountain along one of its longer sides, the Former City Hall, Former Supreme Court and Saint Andrew’s Cathedral on the other, as well as the Civilian War Memorial and Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall at either end of its shorter sides.

4 The historic site is associated with key milestones in Singapore’s history, including the victory parade celebrating the formal surrender of the Japanese in Singapore on 12 September 1945; the victory rally of the first fully elected Legislative Assembly on 3 June 1959; the installation of Mr Yusof Ishak as the first Malayan-born Yang di-Pertuan Negara (head of state) and the unveiling of National Symbols on 3 December 1959; as well as the inaugural National Day Parade on 9 August 1966.

5 The Padang is also one of Singapore’s oldest spaces for public recreation and celebrations, and hosted sporting events during the colonial period such as New Year’s day sports and cricket matches. Celebrations for royal birthdays, jubilees, coronations, Lunar New Year, Thaipusam and the Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday have also been held there. Today, the Padang continues to function as a key recreation and commemorative space for members of all communities, hosting major sporting events such as the Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby Sevens and serving as the starting and end-point of the Singapore Marathon.

6 The Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) and Singapore Recreation Club (SRC) sit on either ends of the Padang, and are key community stakeholders involved in the maintenance and use of the site. Mr Zoher Motiwalla, President of the SCC, said, “The gazette has been long overdue in recognising the Padang’s position as the site of many significant national events, and its

importance as one of the roots of our country's history and heritage. The SCC has been privileged to have been a part of the Padang since we were established in 1852, and to have been able to witness Singapore's growth and development around the field into a sovereign nation and our home. We take very seriously our role as one of the stalwart custodians of this newest National Monument, the Padang, and will continue to help maintain it as a place that brings communities together to interact and play through sports and leisure activities."

7 Mr Chang Yeh Hong, President of the SRC, added, "The SRC Management Committee and its Members are delighted that the Padang is gazetted as the 75th National Monument. Located at the eastern end of the Padang, the SRC has been the co-custodian of this historically and culturally rich heritage ground for the past 139 years. Besides maintaining this historical site, the Club has continued its tradition of promoting sports for all – every week the Padang is abuzz with sporting activities, from soccer to softball, while local and international soccer and softball tournaments, as well as youth soccer clinics, have also been organised, to name a few. This is a tradition we will proudly uphold."

New outreach programmes to commemorate the gazette

8 Following the gazette, the National Heritage Board (NHB) will promote greater awareness and appreciation of the Padang's significance in Singapore's history through various commemorative initiatives to be launched from August, including tours and interactive games for students and members of the public. These initiatives include *Maze @Padang*, a Minecraft game for upper primary school students where players will be transported to a virtual underground maze beneath the Padang. While competing against their peers to hunt for clues and answer questions to escape the maze in the fastest possible time, students can learn about the significance of the space and the important milestones in Singapore's road to independence in a fun and interactive manner.

9 In addition, new guided tours focusing on the Padang and two of its surrounding National Monuments – Former City Hall and Former Supreme Court – will be launched in the month of August. Members of the public can also look forward to *Monumental Hunt in the Civic District* launching in November this year, a fun-filled puzzle hunt in the Civic District to discover fascinating new facts about our National Monuments.

10 Ms Jean Wee, Director of the Preservation of Sites and Monuments division, NHB, said, “The successful gazette of the Padang reflects our ongoing efforts to enhance the preservation and promotion of places and spaces of national significance to Singapore. The Padang, one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore, is an iconic social and community space that has borne witness to many significant national events, and now continues to serve as a venue for recreation and sporting events. Together with our 74 other National Monuments, it will contribute to the architectural and cultural diversity of our nation’s built heritage, and be celebrated as one of the many places that define Singapore and our people.”

11 For more information, please refer to:

- **Annex A:** Information on the Padang
- **Annex B:** Information on upcoming outreach programmes
- **Annex C:** List of Singapore’s National Monuments

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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 a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.



About the Preservation of Sites and Monuments Division

The Preservation of Sites and Monuments (PSM) division, under the National Heritage Board (NHB) and with advice from the PSM Advisory Board, guides the preservation of buildings, monuments and sites, which commemorates Singapore's heritage as defined under the Preservation of Monuments Act. The PSM division also leads NHB's joint efforts with National Parks Board to list the Singapore Botanic Gardens as Singapore's first UNESCO world heritage site. It also oversees the 100 heritage sites that have been marked by NHB.

The PSM division's administration of the preservation gazette is complemented by its outreach objectives to promote a renewed appreciation and understanding of National Monuments and their history, and to encourage people to relate to them as sites of memory that convey a sense of place, identity and belonging. To date, 74 structures have been gazetted as National Monuments. For more information on the PSM division, please visit <https://www.nhb.gov.sg/what-we-do/our-work/preserve-our-stories-treasures-and-places/national-monuments-and-marked-historic-sites/preservation-of-sites-and-monuments>.

The Padang

The Padang is one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore for public recreation, and has been a commemorative space for people to gather and participate in witnessing the key milestones of Singapore's history.

Fronting the Former Supreme Court and Former City Hall buildings, the Padang is a key landmark in Singapore, with its open green space standing out amidst the built-up colonial buildings immediately ahead of it, and the larger commercial core of the city centre looming to its south-west.

Designers:	N/A
Address:	Opposite the Former City Hall and Former Supreme Court Building

Historic Interest of the Padang

- In existence since c.1822, the Padang is one of the oldest open spaces in Singapore continually used for public recreation and commemoration.
- It has served as a key recreation and commemorative space for members of all communities:
 - Past sporting events during the colonial period included annual New Year's day sports including tug of war, high jump and football matches. Cricket matches were also held there.
 - Today, besides cricket, other sporting events including the Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby Sevens, and the starting and end-point of the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon are at the Padang. In addition, the Singapore Grand Prix circuit passes the Padang en route to Anderson Bridge and the Esplanade.
 - During the colonial period, Lunar New Year, Royal Birthdays, Jubilees and Coronations, the Prophet Muhammad's Birthday and occasionally Thaipusam would be commemorated with fireworks displays at the Padang, entertaining all members of the community.
- It was a key commemorative space for people to gather and participate as witnesses to key milestones in Singapore history. These included:
 - The World War II victory parade celebrating the formal surrender of the Japanese in Singapore on 12 September 1945.
 - The victory rally of the elected legislative council after Singapore was granted internal self-governance on 3 June 1959.
 - The installation of Yusof bin Ishak as the *Yang di Pertuan Negara* of Singapore and introduction of the state flag, coat of arms and national anthem on 3 December 1959.
 - The declaration of merger with the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.

- The first National Day Parade on 9 August 1966, and every National Day Parade thereafter until 1975.
- The SG50 National Day Parade on 9 August 2015.
- The Padang was also used as a space for significant nationalist parades, rallies and protests including:
 - A victory rally held by the Chinese community on 15 September 1945, celebrating the defeat of Japan in China.
 - A demonstration by 500 students of Nanyang University protesting perceived government bias against Nanyang University and its leader, Tan Lark Sye, on 7 October 1963.
- Some evidence suggests that the Padang could have been the site of negotiations between the British East India Company and the Sultan of Johore and Temenggong leading up to the eventual signing of the treaty on 6 February 1819 which allowed the establishment of the settlement of Singapore.

Architectural Interest of the Padang

- Visually, the Padang stands out against the highly built-up colonial and commercial core of the city centre as an open, green urban space.
- As an urban landscape, the Padang is conceptually seen in a number of colonial town plans of other former British colony cities in the region.

Information on upcoming outreach programmes

Maze@Padang on Minecraft

Date: August 2022 (pilot), October 2022 (launch)

Fee to be released

Open to bookings by schools from mid-October. Email nhb_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg for more information.

Targeted at upper primary students, *Maze@Padang* is a multi-player online Minecraft game where students will be transported to a virtual underground maze beneath the Padang. Participants will compete against their peers to hunt for clues and answer questions in a bid to escape the maze in the fastest possible time. The game will allow students to learn about the significance of the Padang and the important milestones in Singapore's road to independence in a fun and interactive manner.

Maze@Padang will be launched in August 2022 as a pilot for Tao Nan School. Bookings for the programme will be made available for all upper primary students from mid-October 2022 as a post-exam activity.

More Than A Green Field

Dates and time:

- 13, 21, 27 August: 4pm - 5.30pm
- 14, 20, 28 August: 10am - 11.30am & 4 - 5.30pm

Fee: \$5 (standard); \$3 (students and senior citizens)

Registration starts on 9 August, 10am on <https://peatix.com/group/27721/view>, on a first-come-first-served basis.

This tour centres on Singapore's newest gazetted National Monument – the Padang, and takes participants through the majestic Former Supreme Court and Former City Hall. Learn about the historical significance behind these monuments and the key milestones in Singapore's journey to nationhood which they have borne witness to.

Monumental Hunt in the Civic District

Date: Every Saturday from 5 November - 18 December 2022

Time: 10am - 3pm

Ticketing information to be released soon

Join Mongo the Monkey for a fun-filled puzzle hunt in the Civic District! Inspired by escape rooms and treasure hunts, players will get to explore the area, discover fascinating new facts about our National Monuments, and solve puzzles to discover the location of the final treasure.

List of Singapore's National Monuments

	Name of Building/Site/Structure	Date of Gazette
1	Former Thong Chai Medical Institution (1892)	28 June 1973
2	Armenian Church of St Gregory the Illuminator (1835–36)	28 June 1973
3	St Andrew's Cathedral (Rebuilt 1856–64)	28 June 1973
4	Former Telok Ayer Market (now Lau Pa Sat) (1890–94)	28 June 1973
5	Thian Hock Keng (1839–42)	28 June 1973
6	Sri Mariamman Temple (Rebuilt 1843)	28 June 1973
7	Hajjah Fatimah Mosque (1845–46)	28 June 1973
8	Cathedral of the Good Shepherd (1843–47)	28 June 1973
9	Nagore Dargah (now Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre) (1828–30)	19 November 1974
10	Al-Abrar Mosque (1850–55)	19 November 1974
11	House of Tan Yeok Nee (The Former Salvation Army HQ) (1885)	19 November 1974
12	Tan Si Chong Su (1876–78)	19 November 1974
13	Jamae Mosque (Rebuilt 1830–35)	19 November 1974
14	Sultan Mosque (Rebuilt 1924–28)	8 March 1975
15	St George's Church (1910–13)	10 November 1978
16	Hong San See (1908–12)	10 November 1978
17	Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple (Rebuilt 1961–66)	10 November 1978
18	Abdul Gafoor Mosque (1907–27)	5 July 1979
19	Siong Lim Temple (now Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery) (1902–08)	14 October 1980
20	Raffles Hotel (1887–1907)	4 March 1987 (Re-gazetted on 3 June 1995)
21	Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church (1924–25)	23 March 1989
22	Goodwood Park Hotel (Tower Block) (1900)	23 March 1989
23	Former Convent of Holy Infant Jesus Chapel (now CHIJMES Hall) (1903) and Caldwell House (1840–41)	26 October 1990
24	Istana and Sri Temasek (1867–69)	14 February 1992 (Re-gazetted on 1 October 1993)
25	Former City Hall (1926–29)	14 February 1992
26	Victoria Theatre (1856–62) and Concert Hall (1902–05)	14 February 1992
27	Former Parliament House and Annex Building (1826–27)	14 February 1992, 26 June 1992
28	Former Supreme Court (1937–39)	14 February 1992
29	Former Empress Place Building (now Asian Civilisations Museum) (1864–67)	14 February 1992
30	National Museum (now National Museum of Singapore) (1884–87)	14 February 1992

31	Former St Joseph's Institution – Main Building (1855–67), Chapel (1911–12) and Classroom (1906–07) (now Singapore Art Museum)	14 February 1992 26 June 1992
32	Former Attorney-General's Chambers (now Parliament House Block C) (Rebuilt c.a. 1906)	14 February 1992
33	Former Sun Yat Sen Villa (now Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall) (1900–02)	28 October 1994
34	Yueh Hai Ching Temple (1852–1855)	28 June 1996
35	Maghain Aboth Synagogue (1878)	27 February 1998
36	Former Ministry of Labour Building (now Family Justice Courts) (1928)	27 February 1998
37	Former Tao Nan School (now The Peranakan Museum) (1910–12)	27 February 1998
38	Chesed-El Synagogue (1905)	18 December 1998
39	Former Hill Street Police Station (1934–36)	18 December 1998
40	Ying Fo Fui Kun (1881–82)	18 December 1998
41	Central Fire Station (1908–09)	18 December 1998
42	Former Nanyang University Library & Administration Building, The Former Nanyang University Memorial and The Former Nanyang University Arch (1954–56)	18 December 1998
43	The Chinese High School Clock Tower Building (1925)	19 March 1999
44	Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church (1930–31)	12 January 2000
45	Former Admiralty House (1939)	2 December 2002
46	Tan Teck Guan Building (1911)	2 December 2002
47	College of Medicine Building (1926)	2 December 2002
48	Former Cathay Building (now The Cathay) (1939)	10 February 2003
49	Church of St Peter and St Paul (1869–70)	10 February 2003
50	MacDonald House (1949)	10 February 2003
51	RC Church of St Joseph (1906–12)	14 January 2005
52	Church of Our Lady of Lourdes (1888)	14 January 2005
53	Church of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1901)	14 January 2005
54	Tou Mu Kung Temple (1919–21)	14 January 2005
55	Former Ford Factory (now Memories at Old Ford Factory) (1941)	15 February 2006
56	Former Raffles College (now NUS Campus at Bukit Timah) (1927–53)	11 November 2009
57	Church of St Teresa (1926–28)	11 November 2009
58	Former Keng Teck Whay building (now Singapore Yu Huang Gong) (est 1831)	11 November 2009
59	Former Command House (1939)	11 November 2009
60	Former St James Power Station (1926)	11 November 2009
61	Bowyer Block (1926)	11 November 2009
62	Former Singapore Conference Hall and Trade Union House (now Singapore Conference Hall) (1962–65)	28 December 2010

63	Esplanade Park Memorials: Lim Bo Seng Memorial (1953-54), Tan Kim Seng Fountain (1882) and Cenotaph (1920-22)	28 December 2010
64	Former Tanjong Pagar Railway Station (1929-31)	8 April 2011
65	Civilian War Memorial (1966-67)	15 August 2013
66	Chung Cheng High School (Main) Administration Building and Entrance Arch (1965-68)	10 July 2014
67	Sri Thendayuthapani Temple (rebuilt 1980-83)	20 October 2014
68	Alkaff Upper Serangoon Mosque (1931-32)	19 December 2014
69	Jurong Town Hall (1971-74)	2 June 2015
70	Istana Kampong Gelam (<i>circa</i> 1839-1843)	6 August 2015
71	Former Fullerton Building (1924-28)	7 December 2015
72	Changi Prison Entrance Gate, Wall and Turrets (1936)	15 February 2016
73	Singapore River Bridges: Cavenagh Bridge (1869), Anderson Bridge (1909) and Elgin Bridge (1929)	15 October 2019
74	Fort Siloso (1878)	15 February 2022
75	The Padang (<i>circa</i> 1822)	9 August 2022