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SAF Day

Reaffirming Our Commitment

Story by Marcus Ho / Photography by Mark Ng & Derrick Heng



The impeccable marching by the Colours Party captures the pride and professionalism of the various fighting forces

1 July each year marks SAF Day. It is an important occasion as servicemen throughout the SAF take the opportunity to reflect on and reaffirm their commitment to the defence of our country. This year was no different, with soldiers from all the Services putting up a precise and well coordinated display and parade during the main celebrations held at SAFTI Military Institute (SAFTI MI).

The importance and significance of the SAF Day was amply underscored by the presence and performance of the Colours Party, Guard of Honour and 13 marching contingents as they displayed the pride and professionalism of the SAF. Attended by more than 1,500 regulars, NSF's and NSmen, the event was graced by Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen, and Minister of State for Defence Associate Professor Koo Tsai Kee. Chief of Defence Force, LG Neo Kian Hong led SAF personnel in reciting the SAF pledge to reaffirm their loyalty to the nation and their commitment to the defence of Singapore. A minute of silence was also observed in remembrance of SAF personnel who had lost their lives in the line of duty.

At the parade, President Nathan presented the State Colours to this year's Best Combat Unit, the 1st Commando Battalion, while DPM Teo presented the Best Unit and Best NS Unit awards to 23 SAF units. DPM Teo also presented the SAF NSman of the Year Awards to 15 NSmen during the post-parade reception.

In this year's SAF Day message, DPM Teo extolled the values imparted by our first Defence Minister, the late Dr Goh Keng Swee. He said, "The ability to make tough decisions and fighting spirit were some of the attributes that Dr Goh demanded from the men and women of the SAF. These qualities are as critical and relevant in today's complex and uncertain security landscape.

As we commemorate SAF Day, let us build on Dr Goh's legacy - to ensure that we have a strong and capable SAF that is tough and ready to fight on to ultimate victory. A strong SAF is the most dependable guarantee of our independence to ensure that our families and future generations of Singaporeans can continue to live in peace and decide our own future."

Best Foot Forward

"The sense of pride that I felt was really hard to express in mere words when I was marching past the podium at this year's SAF Day Parade," said 1WO Tang Boon Wee, the Colours' Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM), who is also the RSM of 35th Battalion, Singapore Combat Engineers. "This is the first large-scale parade that I have ever been involved in. Thankfully, the Parade Support Group which consists of past years' parade participants, offered very good advice for me. They shared with me some lessons learnt last year which helped me to perform better."



MWO Ng attributes the success of this year's SAF Day Parade to the intense and thorough preparation

For the Parade RSM, MWO Ng Siak Ping who is also the Sergeant Major for the Specialist and Warrant Officer Institute, the biggest gratification was having a flawless parade despite no prior rehearsals on the very day. He shared, "It was raining the entire morning and afternoon so we were not able to hold any rehearsals. The actual parade was our first attempt on that day, and it was very memorable for me because we managed to execute it flawlessly. And I think one major reason why it was so successful was because we trained really hard over the last few months. I'm especially proud of the NSF's and NSmen who took part in this parade!"

Rededication Ceremony at Temasek Polytechnic

Besides the SAF Day Parade at SAFTI MI, rededication ceremonies were also held at various locations across Singapore by companies and institutions during which NSmen affirmed their commitment to defend Singapore by reciting the SAF Pledge. Over at the East Zone, Temasek Polytechnic held its annual rededication ceremony for the tenth year. The event was officiated by DPM Teo who also delivered the SAF Day Mes-

sage. Chief of Defence Force, LG Neo Kian Hong, together with some senior SAF commanders, was also present.

2WO (RET) Sulaiman Kitto, an Operation Manager at Northlight School who was present at the event shared his thoughts, "It's really good to be wearing green and taking the SAF Pledge again. It has been a few years since I left the Army, but it is still important to remind ourselves that everyone of us has a part to play in our nation's defence. After all, it is only when our country is safe that we can grow."

Another NSman, CPL (NS) Mervin D'Cruz who is a Trooper from HQ Commandos felt that the rededication ceremony was an excellent reminder of his major takeaways from NS. He added, "Now while I'm studying, I feel blessed that I have completed my NS. I have matured in my understanding and have taken a more realistic perspective of things. For me, NS is a first bite of reality in the working world. I now begin to see things clearer and take on a more positive approach in my studies. I have also begun to understand the value of education, and have even started prioritising what is important in my life."

DLS—Demonstrating Support for NS

While NSmen play a vital role in the defence of Singapore, they also contribute to economic growth by being part of its workforce. It is thus essential that they maintain a healthy balance between the two roles. Davis Langdon & Seah Singapore Pte Ltd (DLS) is one of the companies in Singapore that has been actively supporting Total Defence and its NSmen employees. This year, DLS held its inaugural in-house SAF Day rededication ceremony at Furama Hotel with BG Lim Teck Yin, Commandant of SAFTI MI and Director of National Service Affairs gracing the occasion.

"Taking the SAF Pledge brings back a lot of memories for me," said Mr Seah Kwee Yong, a Director at DLS who had served as sergeant during his NS days. "As you can see, I'm wearing the first generation of Our Army's uniform. Wearing this uniform again really reminds me of all the tough trainings



DPM Teo (left) taking the SAF Pledge at Temasek Polytechnic



Although he is longer in service, Mr Seah still takes pride in wearing green

that I went through, and how important it is for us to always be vigilant of threats, because when the call comes, we must be ready to answer to it. It doesn't matter if you are a civilian, NSF or NSman. In one way or another, we all have our role to fill when it comes to defending our nation."

Over the years, DLS has also set up numerous policies in support of Total Defence and NS. Mr Khoo Sze Boon, Executive Director of DLS explained, "One of our biggest policies is that we do not allow our NSmen employees to defer their In-Camp Trainings (ICTs). It is important that they always go for their ICT and perform well. We also reward staff who have performed well during their ICT with letters of commendation and provide monetary incentives for good IPPT results achieved."

In addition, DLS has implemented a human capital recruitment policy four years ago to consider fresh polytechnic graduates who are pre-enlistees, waiting to serve their full-time NS. Mr Khoo added, "Every year, we have an annual polytechnic recruitment drive and we realised that we have a lot of solid candidates but most were waiting to be enlisted. So we thought instead of writing them off, we offer them suitable positions in the company, and allow them to re-join us upon completing their NS. In this sense, it will be a win-win situation; we get to tap on their talents, and they get a secure and enriching job with us."

CPL (NS) Arshad bin Roslan is one such serviceman who has re-joined DLS upon completing his NS. He shared, "I'm very grateful for the job I'm having right now. I was an assistant



LTA (NS) Khoo believes that every organisation should support their NSmen employees



NSmen from DLS taking the SAF Pledge as a reaffirmation of their commitment to defending Singapore



SSG (NS) Alber Yong with DPM Teo while receiving his NSman of the Year Award

quantity surveyor when I joined the company after I graduated from polytechnic, and I learned a lot about the construction industry. Back then, it was more of a learning process. After I completed my NS and re-joined the firm, I started applying what I have learnt. I really like working here because I don't have to start from square one again when I re-join the company. I simply continued where I left off."

Recognising Outstanding NSmen

At the post-parade reception at SAFTI MI, DPM Teo also presented the NSman of the Year Award to 12 Army personnel for their unwavering Commitment to Defence (C2D). Three recipients, CPL (NS) Mohamed Farid from 1st General Supply and Transport Battalion, CPL (NS) Kuah Leng Cher from Special Operations Training Centre and LCP (NS) Eu Teck Meng, from 451st Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment received their awards under the newly created enlistees category. The creation of the Enlistee of the Year Category is one of the recommendations made by the Fifth Committee to Recognise the Contributions of Operationally Ready National Servicemen to Total Defence (RECORD V), it serves to recognise well-performing NSmen holding junior appointments.

CPL (NS) Farid shared the reason why he chose to serve NS positively, "We should not do so just because it is required by law. As NSmen, we set aside about two weeks of our lives to

serve the nation. Such sacrifice is relatively small since there are 52 weeks a year. As we are required to serve anyway, we should make the best of our time and contribute as much as possible!" (see story on CPL (NS) Farid in Army News Issue No. 174)

CPL (NS) Kuah, another recipient under the new category said, "I was very surprised when I heard that I was nominated for the NSmen of the Year Award. When I heard the news, I went to look it up and I realised that most of the previous winners were either officers or warrant officers. It is a huge honour for me to win this award. I believe that this new category will help recognise the younger outstanding NSmen and motivate all NSmen out there like myself. Our roles may be smaller from our point of view, but everyone of us is vital to achieving mission success."

Another recipient, SSG (NS) Alber Yong, Battalion Sergeant Major, 283rd Battalion, Singapore Artillery enjoys going back for ICT every year. He explained, "I always love going back for ICT to catch up with my men. There's this sense of camaraderie that has always stuck with us every since we were NSF's. And it's nice to see how we have grown from just normal 18 year-old boys to men with careers and families to support."



CPL (NS) Kuah is glad that outstanding younger NSmen are now being recognised as well

NSman of the Year Award Recipients

- LTC (NS) Lee Peng Hui, 76 SIB
- LTC (VOL) Chia Seng Jiang, 26 SIB
- MAJ (NS) Ridzuan bin Ismail, 696 SIR
- MAJ (NS) Chong Soon Yong Avery, GS (Ops)
- CPT (NS) Tan Tean Chuan Gabriel, 464 SAR
- 1WO (NS) Ong Chee Ming, 282 SA*
- SSG (NS) Yong Yew Chun Alber, 283 SA
- 1SG (NS) Lee Wah Siang, 652 SIR
- 1SG (NS) Yuen Kam Hon, 353 SCE
- CPL (NS) Kuah Leng Cher, SOTC
- CPL (NS) Mohamed Farid bin Jumali, 1 GSTB
- LCP (NS) Eu Teck Meng, 451 SAR

*1WO (NS) Ong was featured in Army News Issue No. 175

9 DIV/INF

3SG(NS) Cai Boli

I am always passionate about training my recruits because I believe that I too have something to learn from them.

9 DIV/INF

LCP(NS) Yim Ka Tai Victor

As my ORD date drew near, I felt motivated to help the new NSF's settle into their new surroundings and share my experience with them.

2PDF Comd

CPL Teo Soon Kit, Darren

My training has given me a better appreciation for units involved in 24/7 operations.

Guards

LTA(NS) Tit Shen Ping, Gabriel

I have always believed in doing my best even when failure seems certain.

Armour

CPL Edmund Cheong

No matter what rank or appointment you hold, you have a certain power to change things and make a difference.

3 DIV

CPL Muhammad Amirul Aleef Bin Amir

Before NS, I was 'haywire' and took everything lightly. Now, I do things the proper way and have learnt to value life more.

CSSCOM

CPL(NS) Weng Renxin

If you make a commitment to never run away from challenges but face them and defeat them, NS will be a positive experience.

6 DIV

CPL(NS) Goh Hong De Pryor

To make the best out of one's NS experience, one needs to constantly keep a positive attitude.

Engineers

CPL Lau Jiawei, Sean

NS has really taught me to face my challenges boldly and shown me that they can be overcome.

Transport

CPL Loh Yong Tah

As a transport operator, I've honed my time management and people skills.

3 DIV

CPL Li Zhiwen, Jordan

NS is like a right of passage for me—a transition from schooling to the working world and has taught me to be professional and responsible.

CIG/SMI-Inst

CPL Shen Mao Zheng, Deric

I never imagined how much I can contribute to the SAF but I discovered that if I have right attitude, it is a win-win situation.

9 DIV/INF

CPL Loh Wan Xin

In serving NS, I learnt to believe in myself and constantly explore my limits.

Guards

PTE Vickesh S/O Virapandian

Getting my Guards Beret in front of my loved ones was a defining moment that made me proud.

Armour

3SG Ong Shao Ming

Everyone is born with some unique talents, and we should not be shy to display these talents and voice our suggestions.

6 DIV

LTA(NS) Teo Ng Jui, Gabriel

NS has prepared me to take on challenges and lead people. I have matured and become a better person.

3 DIV

2LT Song Ruihong, Benjamin

The emphasis on professionalism, excelling in whatever we do and taking pride in our duties will remain with me even after my full-time NS.

3 DIV

3SG Ee Xing Jian, Colin

Through NS I have discovered many of my weaknesses and strengths.

Armour

2SG(NS) Seng Kok Ping

NS has changed me to be more independent and professional in whatever I do.

2PDF Comd

CPL Muhammad Heidri Bin Mohd Shah

As a medic, I am motivated to provide a high standard of medical support and care for our soldiers.

3 DIV

CPL(NS) Chan Zheng Ming

My overseas exercise experience has really boosted my confidence in the SAF.

3 DIV

LTA(NS) Ow Yong Chaan Loung

I'm just glad that I have not let my fellow comrades who have supported me throughout NS down.

Engineers

CFC Ling Yang Feng

I am pleasantly surprised and honoured by this award which I see as a recognition of my sheer grit and effort.

6 DIV

2SG(NS) Chuah Boon Keong

In BMT I discovered the meaning of brotherhood.

3 DIV

CFC(NS) Vincent Neo Weisheng

NS trained me to learn and share collaboratively with my peers.

2PDF Comd

3SG Lee Fang Liang

My superiors and peers have displayed exemplary leadership. As a result, I am also inspired to lead and make a difference to others.

Signals

LTA(NS) Lim Kian Ngee

As a permanent resident, I am grateful to Singapore for grooming me as an individual through NS.

Engineers

3SG(NS) Chin Tang Jie

Because I am the same age as most of my trainees, I work doubly hard to earn their respect.

6 DIV

LCP(NS) Muhammad Yusoff Bin Saleh

The Army is a great place to hone your leadership skills and develop your independence.

2PDF Comd

2SG(NS) Koh Zhengwei, Jestyn

Leading my company as the stand-in Company Sergeant Major was a nervous but exhilarating experience.

2PDF Comd

LTA(NS) Lock Hong Quan

National Service is a melting pot of society. A scholar sleeping in the same bunk as a school drop-out will realise that they have more similarities than differences in life.

Signals

CFC(NS) Ong Wei Yi, Alywin

Nothing is impossible if we stay positive and treat each mistake as a learning opportunity.

Artillery

LTA(NS) Seth Lim Ee Jer

NS has taught me to press on regardless of the difficulties and strengthened my mettle and resolve.

Transport

3SG Tan Han Sen

It is always heartening each time I see one of my men put in extra effort for the sake of the team.

Commandos

LTA(NS) Andrew Ong

The experiences I gained in the army help me realise that we are all interdependent.

MES

3SG(NS) Muhammad Khairul Rusydi Bin Mohamad

This award is also an affirmation of the solid support that my commanders and peers have given me.

Supply

3SG Makoto Hong Cheng

I am motivated by the realisation that the SAF is truly a caring organisation.

Engineers

LTA(NS) Christopher Adam Hussey

I set some goals for myself before I enlisted. The Army has allowed me to fulfill all these goals.

9 DIV/INF

3SG Sim Enwei, Ansel

NS has taught me to work outside my comfort zone.

Guards

LCP Toh Ming Chong, Kenneth

I gained a sense of fulfilment each time I am able to effectively communicate my commanders' intent to the ground.

CIG/SMI-Inst

LTA(NS) Chee Weiqin

If you have deep technical expertise, you can take ownership of your own responsibilities instead of just waiting for orders.

3 DIV

CPL Sampath Ragupathy

I moved from India to Singapore in November 2008. Despite my poor English, I overcame my difficulties and now I am able to perform my duties efficiently.

Guards

2SG(NS) Tey Cher Fu

I believe that if I start by treating my men with respect, they too will reciprocate by recognising my leadership and performing up to mark.

Supply

2LT Ng Yao Yi, Kennedy

My most memorable experience was when we constructed a bridge under challenging conditions.

Recognising Commitment & Contribution

This year, 45 NSF's from Our Army received the inaugural NSF of the Year Award, which is one of the initiatives put forth by RECORD V in September last year. The award seeks to recognise NSF's for their sustained efforts and commitment to the defence of Singapore. Army News pays tribute to these outstanding NSF's, some of whom have already completed their full-time National Service. They share their thoughts on their NS experience.

of the year award

Visit the Army Internet Portal at www.mindef.gov.sg/army for more stories on the NSF of the Year Award

Defining our Best

Story by Samuel Cheam / Photography by Mark Ng

The SAF Day celebration in July is also the time when the best fighting forces are recognised through the annual Best Unit Competition. Army News visited some of these winners to find out more about their achievements and reasons for success.

BEST COMBAT UNIT



Commandos undergo rigorous training to fulfil their operational roles which include airborne jumps

1st Commando Battalion (1 CDO)

Pride in The Red Beret

Most people would freeze if they ever have to jump out of a plane hundreds of feet in the air. But for the Red Berets of 1 CDO who have won the Best Combat Unit Award for a record 24th time since the award's inception, this is all in a day's training. As elite soldiers, our commandos are prepared for a wide variety of missions, such as counter-terrorism and airborne operations.

LTC Leung Shing Tai, Commanding Officer of 1 CDO believes that the unit's continued success can be attributed to several factors, "The unit is focused on giving our guys a positive National Service experience by first helping them understand the importance of National Service. We believe in developing confidence in their ability to defend the nation by training them hard and training them well. It's also important to instil willingness to defend the nation through leading by example and cultivating a strong unit identity."

Instilling a sense of pride and identity in the men is one of 1WO William Kho's responsibilities as RSM of 1 CDO. 1WO Kho, like LTC Leung, believes that if the men are ready and willing, everything else falls into place, "Rather than motivating them to do well for each individual training exercise, I believe in inspiring the men to be self motivated in everything they do. We do this through sharing and constant

Best Unit Competition Winners

| | |
|--|---------|
| Best Combat Unit | 1 CDO |
| Best Infantry/Guards Unit | 3 GDS |
| Best Armour Unit | 42 SAR |
| Best Combat Support Unit | 39 SCE |
| Best Artillery Unit | 21 SA |
| Best Engineers Unit | 39 SCE |
| Best Signals Unit | 1 SIG |
| Best Combat Service Support Unit | 3 TPT |
| Best NS INF/GDS Unit for 3 DIV | 688 SIR |
| Best NS INF/GDS Unit for 6 DIV | 700 SIR |
| Best NS INF/GDS Unit for 9 DIV | 720 SIR |
| Best NS INF/GDS Unit for GDS Formation | 685 GDS |
| Best NS INF/GDS Unit for 2 PDF COMD | 663 SIR |
| Best NS Armour Unit | 442 SAR |
| Best NS Artillery Unit | 280 SA |
| Best NS Combat Engineers Unit | 329 SCE |
| Best NS Signals Unit | 9 SIG |
| Best NS Combat Service Support Unit | 31 CSSB |

communication from myself and the other commanders at every possible opportunity."

The road to becoming a commando is not an easy one and the rigorous training that LTC Leung mentioned entails a whole gamut of challenging and unique tasks. Commandos have to undergo small unit training, specialised training in fields like demolitions and complete a long gruelling route march amongst other things. CPL Ranveer Kumar Verma, a commando fighter remembers the day he finally received his coveted Red Beret, "There was an incredible sense of pride and achievement when I received the Red Beret. My buddies and I had completed almost a year of tough training to get to this point and I remember tears rolling down my cheeks."



21 SA operates the SSPH 1 Primus which provides long-range artillery support (Picture courtesy of 21 SA)

21st Battalion Singapore Artillery (21 SA)

Getting Things Right

"Winning the Best Artillery Unit Award was never our aim," said LTC Karen Wong, Commanding Officer 21 SA, "Instead what we try to do is to get things right." And getting things right is never more important when one is dealing with the 28-tonne steel behemoths that are the Singapore Self Propelled Howitzer (SSPH) 1 Primus. These massive artillery vehicles are the modern descendants of the ancient catapult, lobbing their deadly projectiles across 30 kilometres in support of advancing forces. Essentially artillery on wheels, the Primus is the gun of choice for 21 SA, the winner of the Best Artillery Unit Award.

Part of getting things right in 21 SA is making sure that the people in the unit feel good about what they do as LTC Wong explained, "We don't believe in using off days or what have you to incentivise our people to do well. Instead

it is about creating a positive experience by motivating men and commanders and celebrating the successes that they achieve." Apart from winning the Best Artillery Unit Award, 21 SA has picked up various awards in the past year from winning sporting competitions like the Artillery Men of Steel Road Relay. The unit also scored a Readiness Condition (REDCON) 2A at

their evaluation in Exercise Thunder Warrior earlier this year.

LTC Wong believes that feeling good about their roles as artillerymen will eventually lead to a strong commitment to



The philosophy of getting things right served 21 SA well during Exercise Thunder Warrior in New Zealand (Picture courtesy of 21 SA)

BEST NS COMBAT ENGINEERS UNIT

329th Battalion Singapore Combat Engineers (329 SCE)

A Unit of Friends

Take a walk along the idyllic beaches of Changi on the weekend and you are likely to see beautiful sights of the sea and sandy beaches. If your visit coincides with 329 SCE's In-Camp Training (ICT) however, you will probably see a beach strewn with barbed wire, obstacles, trenches and ditches



The close bonds forged since their active days have led to a unit of friends within 329 SCE

more akin to Normandy in June 1944, the scene of the invasion by Allied Forces to free Europe. As field engineers, the men of 329 SCE help to defend our nation's shores from hostile forces. Using a variety of equipment and machinery at their disposal, they are able to construct beach defences to prevent the enemy forces from gaining a foothold on our shores.

Commanding Officer MAJ (NS) Ong Chin Woo credits the unit's success to a philosophy built on four key tenets, "First, we believe in having a 'flat' structure in the unit where rank



The men of 329 SCE utilise construction machinery like this excavator to build beach defences

is still important but we listen and get feedback regardless of the NSman's rank. There are many talented people with good ideas, not just amongst the commanders. This leads to the second tenet of positive attitude where we try to foster culture of wanting to do well. Setting clear and sound objectives is our third tenet and lastly we believe in teamwork through developing close bonds within the unit."

It is perhaps the last tenet of MAJ (NS) Ong's philosophy that is most evident. Apart from undergoing the usual rigours of ICTs together, the men of 329 SCE meet up regularly as friends every few months. This friendship and understanding fostered over many years is what helps them perform as a unit as LCP (NS) Ian Lee, a field engineer, described, "Most of us have been together since our active days and our close ties mean that we all work as a team; officers, specialists and men." MAJ (NS) Chew Heng Wee, the battalion second-in-command credits this as the main reason for the unit winning the Best NS Combat Engineers Unit Award for the second year running, "Every man's contribution counts and this award would not have been possible if not for everyone's combined efforts."

BEST COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT UNIT



The LARC V companies operate special amphibious vehicles to overcome water obstacles (Picture courtesy of 3 TPT)

3rd SAF Transport Battalion (3 SAF TPT)

Developing Competency Through Recognising Talent

By land, sea or air. If there are supplies you need, 3 SAF TPT will ensure it gets there quickly and safely. This unique transport battalion supports not just the Army but the Navy and Air Force as well. It performs a variety of roles such as

preparing for aerial resupply and cargo, and providing motor transport services. The diverse duties of the unit demand operational excellence, something that LTC Melvin Tan, Commanding Officer of 3 SAF TPT, believes is ingrained in the battalion, "Our unit's vision is 'a haven of excellence' and it is this culture and tradition of excellence that is the key to our success."

A comprehensive training framework ensures that personnel in 3 SAF TPT acquire and develop the necessary skills

and competence. This is one important role that the warrant officers and specialists in the battalion have taken charge of. They firmly believe in leveraging on the skills of their men in training as 3WO Shankar, a platoon sergeant in the Aerial Cargo Rigger (ACR) platoon, explained, "When we conduct training we always consult the men and trainers to better identify their needs and construct better training programmes." Uniquely, operators like CPL Joshua Tham can also become trainers as 3WO Shankar revealed, "There are only so few commanders, so we pick the best of the operators, give them additional training and experience and let them run some of the training here." This process of recognising talent is something CPL Tham finds extremely rewarding, "I was very proud to be selected as an instructor. To me, it was a great opportunity to lead and really showed how our commanders recognise our talent regardless of our ranks."

"We are not just competent in what we do but also committed to doing it well. And that's how we achieve results," explained ME4 Lim Bak Huat, Officer Commanding of a company of Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo Vehicle Five-tonne (LARC V), used for transporting supplies through water obstacles. Apart from the daily rigours of training, opportunities are given to the men for personal development outside of their job scopes. The unit regularly organises courses such as those in Emotional Quotient for the men, and opens up opportunities normally afforded to regular servicemen to full-time national servicemen as well. This combination of rewarding talent and providing greater opportunities for development has led to committed and competent people who bond as one cohesive team. 1SG Victor Teo, a section commander in the ACR platoon, who started his Army journey as a full-time national serviceman in 3 SAF TPT said, "I came here just wanting to serve my two years and be done with it. But the unit stimulated in me a deep interest in the job that I am doing today. I also developed a passion for the Army which has led me to where I am today."

Promotions

An Inspiration and Affirmation

Story by Jonathan Chan / Photography by Mark Ng

In a SAF-wide promotion ceremony held at the Ministry of Defence Auditorium on 24 June, 499 officers, 147 warrant officers and 74 Military Experts (MEs) received their certificates of promotion. Among them were Chief of Defence Force, MG Neo Kian Hong and Chief of Army, BG Chan Chun Sing, who have been promoted to the ranks of LG and MG respectively. In another promotion ceremony held for Army personnel on 18 June in the Leaders' hall at Pasir Laba Camp, 735 regulars and NSmen were also promoted. All the promotions took effect from 1 July.

A promotion in rank is often perceived as a milestone in one's military career or NS journey. The promotion serves not only to recognise and reward the servicemen and women for their past contributions but also affirms their potential to undertake greater future challenges. Army News interviewed some of our promoted personnel, many of whom felt it is an honour bestowed that will inspire them to serve with even greater zeal.

Newly promoted SLTC Fadzully Bin Abas, Commander Infantry Training Institute, shared, "This promotion reminds me of my responsibility towards the SAF and my men. It inspires me to further improve the standards of training and ensure that the people in my unit have a quality and positive experience in their everyday activities." SLTC Fadzully is an empathetic leader who adopts a simple guiding principle for improvement. He said, "I do not make my men do things that I myself do not like to do or put them in situations that I myself do not like to be in. It is important that I care for my men as the strength of a unit is dependent on the quality of its men and leaders alike."

Like SLTC Fadzully, 1WO Yew Yuen Keong, Regimental Sergeant Major at 3rd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment, personifies the SAF's strong focus on grooming and developing its personnel to their maximum potential. He said, "I truly enjoy training my men to reach greater heights. It is in my nature to go down to the ground to take charge of training and refine the skills of my commanders, giving them the necessary soft skills to move on to higher posts. With this new rank, I am reminded of the importance in making an extra and con-



ME3 Loi (left) is excited about the new opportunities and prospects opened to him with the new rank



LTC (NS) Lim (left) receiving his certificate of promotion from CDF LG Neo



SLTC (NS) Abu Bakar juggles his commitments at work and in NS professionally, allowing him to continue contributing to the SAF

tinual effort to further groom and reward my men, the way the SAF is recognising me with this promotion."

ME3 Loi Chin Thye, Operations Warrant Officer at MES Comd HQ, is excited about the bigger prospects being opened to him with his new rank. Having recently converted to MDES, ME3 Loi views the promotion as yet another great opportunity to serve and be recognised for his expertise and competency, "I am looking forward to some of the development courses now open to me, such as the Advanced Leadership Programme." For MAJ Choy Wai Hong, Deputy Programme Executive Office, his promotion marks another milestone in his fulfilling Army career. In the nine years that he has been with the Army, MAJ Choy had completed a U.S. Field Artillery Captain Course and been deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Weapon Locating Radar detachment. MAJ Choy shared, "My career in the Army has been both professionally and personally fulfilling. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend an overseas course and serve in our overseas deployment. Following this promotion, I will continue to work hard to bring Our Army to the next higher level."

Many deserving and dedicated NSmen were also promoted. They deserve our admiration and recognition for their ability to juggle and balance the demands of their civilian jobs,

military training and family duties. While meeting multiple needs is undoubtedly a challenge for many, they are also grateful that their NS experience has enriched and complemented their civilian life. CPT (NS) Mohamed Najib Bin Mashuni, OC 731 SIR, an engineer at Keppel Fels LTD, explained, "The mission-based, target-oriented focus in the Army taught me to be more effective in my civilian job. On the whole, my NS experience has truly taught me what it means to be a Singaporean citizen. I am grateful that all Singaporean males share this common experience."

If asked for the key reason behind their ability to fulfil their military commitments, chances are that most NSmen would cite strong support from employers and family members. As such, it is not surprising that many NSmen do not accept full credit for their promotion. SLTC (NS) Abu Bakar Bin Mohd Nor, Commander 27th Singapore Infantry Brigade (27 SIB), felt that the promotion was more than just a great honour for him. He said, "Although I feel humbled and honoured, this promotion is not solely about me. I want to share this joy with those who have supported me, especially my family, employer and the men of 27 SIB." Not withstanding his immense workload as the Senior General Manager at Keppel Shipyard, SLTC (NS) Abu Bakar shows no sign of slowing and has even extended his NS beyond the period required of him. He also sits on the SAFRA Management Committee and is married with two teenage daughters. Despite the heavy demand on his time from work, NS and family, SLTC (NS) Abu Bakar is motivated to contribute even more. He explained, "My men at 27 SIB are a great team. They motivate me and encourage me to give my best. My family is supportive in allowing me to dedicate my time to service and make it possible for me to continue serving in this capacity."

LTC (NS) Lim Chee Kiong from 3rd Singapore Division, also shared the same sentiment when he said, "This promotion is really a testament to the years of guidance and attention given to me by my superiors. They have made my NS journey unforgettable. I signed on the ROVER scheme because I truly enjoy NS, meeting my friends and making new acquaintances. They are like second family to me."

The Mobile Column

Showcasing Strength and Readiness

Story by Jonathan Chan / Photography by Derrick Heng



Our main battle tank, the Leopard 2A4, spearheads the Mobile Column

The Mobile Column never fails to please and impress whenever it makes an appearance. Its sight and sound evokes awe and instils confidence. It emphatically showcases our capabilities and underscores the reasons for our continued peace and security. After a 5-year absence, the Mobile Column has returned to National Day Parade (NDP) with not just a larger force but a wider outreach to the heartlands as well.

After its appearance at the Padang, the Mobile Column will split into three columns and wind its way through Singapore, passing through the five heartland locations of Choa Chu Kang, Woodlands, Bishan, Seng Kang and Eunos.

One United Column

Involving many different formations and organisations, the Mobile Column demonstrates our ability to deal with security threats as one united column. COL Lam Pei Sien, Commander Armour Training Institute and Chairman of the Mobile Column and Celebrations shared, "The SAF and the Home Team are proud to put on display our latest operational assets in this year's Mobile Column. Working together to secure the sovereignty of our nation, this partnership forms the bedrock for Singaporeans to 'Live Our Dreams, Fly Our Flag'." He continued, "The involvement of



The Terrex ICV is among the 74 vehicles making their first appearance at NDP this year



the Home Team underlines the importance of close inter-service and inter-agency cooperation for handling a full spectrum of operations."

3rd Generation Capabilities Go on Display

With its theme of "Ready and Relevant", this year's Mobile Column demonstrates the progress of Our Army's 3rd Generation transformation. Of the more than 200 participating vehicles, 74 are making their NDP appearances for the first time, including the Leopard 2A4 Main Battle Tank and Terrex Infantry Carrier Vehicle (ICV). The Mobile Column will also showcase the Protected Light Utility Vehicle and the Multi Purpose Tactical Vehicle, which are supporting our overseas deployments. COL Lam explained the significance, "This signifies how much we have progressed since the last Mobile Column in 2005, and reflects the SAF's capability for a wider spectrum of operations."

MAJ Lim Kah Keng, Commanding Officer 48th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment (48 SAR), is the Deputy Chairman Mobile Column and Celebrations. He enthused

about the Army's newest heavyweight, "The Leopard 2A4 represents the next step in Our Army's capability. It is a substantial upgrade for us in terms of capabilities and firepower. Fast and agile, its 120mm gun adds to the SAF's arsenal of weapons, boosting our ability to conduct coordinated fire and manoeuvre for a swift and decisive victory."

Herculean Logistical Challenge

Executing the Mobile Column display is indeed a herculean feat requiring detailed planning and coordination. MAJ Lim explained, "The greatest challenge was in the preparation and conduct of rehearsals. Because approximately 900 active servicemen, NSF's and many vehicles from different SAF formations and the Home Team are involved, it was hard balancing each unit's own operational and training demands with our rehearsal schedule. There is also a need to minimise disruptions to various stakeholders in the Tuas and Stadium vicinity where our rehearsals take place. All the formations and stakeholders have been very forthcoming in accommodating the planned rehearsals which are all held on weekends."

To move all the 210 vehicles in an orderly fashion through the streets of Singapore requires meticulous planning and precise execution. After the initial practices in Tuas in May, the rehearsals have shifted to the Padang area since June. Prior to each Padang rehearsal, the vehicles are moved from their camps to the large car parks around the National Stadium in Kallang at midnight on Friday. The next day, they will head towards the Padang for the combined rehearsals. MAJ Lim pointed out the importance of having sufficient practice, "Keeping all the vehicles in perfect alignment and moving at the same speed is important. It exemplifies the discipline and precision of our people. While the new armoured vehicles show our technological advancement, it is the sight of all 210 vehicles from different formations moving together as one column and executing precise actions on the move that is awe-inspiring and confidence-building."

Protecting Our Roads

Due to the weight of the armoured vehicles, it is important that our roads are protected from their impact. All track vehicles will be fitted with rubber pads on their track links to protect the road surface. MAJ Lim explained, "As the F1 Grand Prix will be held on the same roads in September, we worked closely with the Land Transport Authority and F1 Singapore Grand Prix Committee to conduct rigorous trials to ensure that the moving tanks will not damage the road surface. Tests were also conducted along the planned heartland roads. The results showed that there was no change in the quality of the road surface."

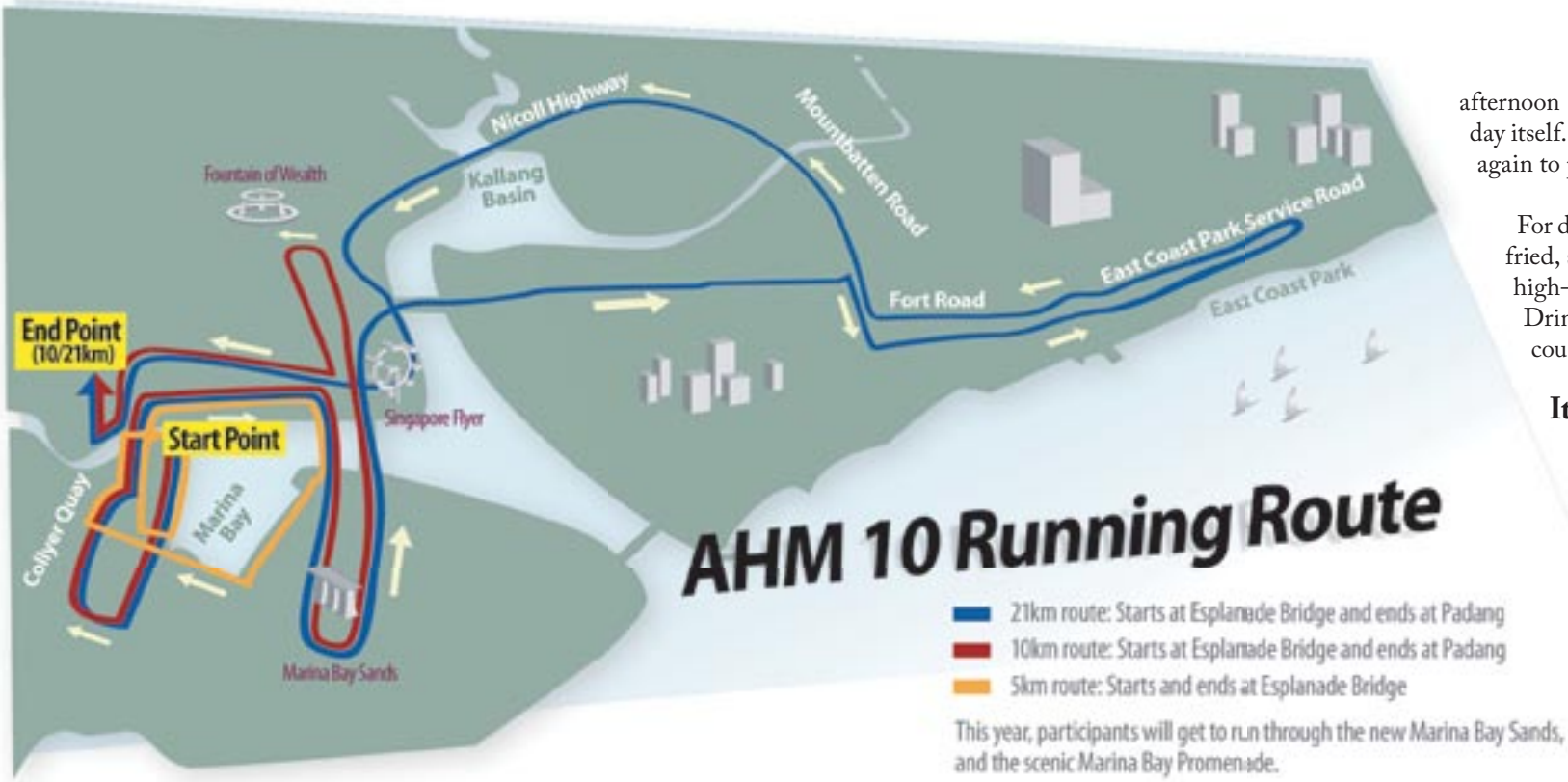
The Mobile Column and Celebrations Committee also worked closely with the Land Transport Authority and Traffic Police to minimise inconvenience to the public during rehearsals. COL Lam elaborated, "To minimise disruption to traffic flow, a rolling carpet closure was adopted whereby any segment or stretch of road would only be closed for approximately 10 minutes to allow the mobile column to pass through. It is opened for normal traffic as soon as it is safe to do so."



MAJ Lim sharing the logistical challenges behind the Mobile Column display

Are you Prepared for AHM?

Story contributed by Soldier Performance Centre, HQAMS



This year's Army Half Marathon (in conjunction SAFRA Singapore Bay Run) will be held on 12 September. As it draws near, it is a good time to take stock of your preparation if you are participating. Ms Grace Heng and Ms Ong Kaifen, Physiotherapists at the Soldier Performance Centre, offer some tips to help you complete your run with only positive memories.

One Month before Race Day

Do not increase the mileage, intensity, volume, and frequency of your training runs by more than 10% per week. Instead, try alternative methods to improve performance such as running through hills or other forms of cross-training for variation. During training, listen to your body. Pain is usually the first sign of over exertion and that something is wrong.

Before any run, do not forget to warm-up for about 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the level of activity and one's fitness level. It helps to prevent muscle cramps and strains. Stretch exercises should also be included to maintain flexibility, and must be done regularly, especially after training. Two weeks before the race, stretch exercises, in particular those targeting the lower limbs should be done daily. Stretch to the point of tension and not pain! After the race or training, cool down properly to allow the heart to gradually return to its resting heart-rate.

After your training, use different recovery strategies to speed up your body's ability for repair and regeneration. This can include active recovery techniques like swimming and cycling or passive recovery techniques such as sports massages.

By now, you should already have selected the appropriate footwear according to your foot-type for the race. A good-fitting pair of running shoes protects your feet from injury and helps to eliminate pain and discomfort during the run.

As the run date looms nearer, begin to taper your training by reducing the intensity of and duration of your runs. Do not cram last minute training into your schedule as it will do you more harm than good.

One Week before Race Day

If you wish to, you can commence carbohydrate loading one week before the actual race. Carbohydrate loading helps to increase energy storage in the body and delay fatigue during the

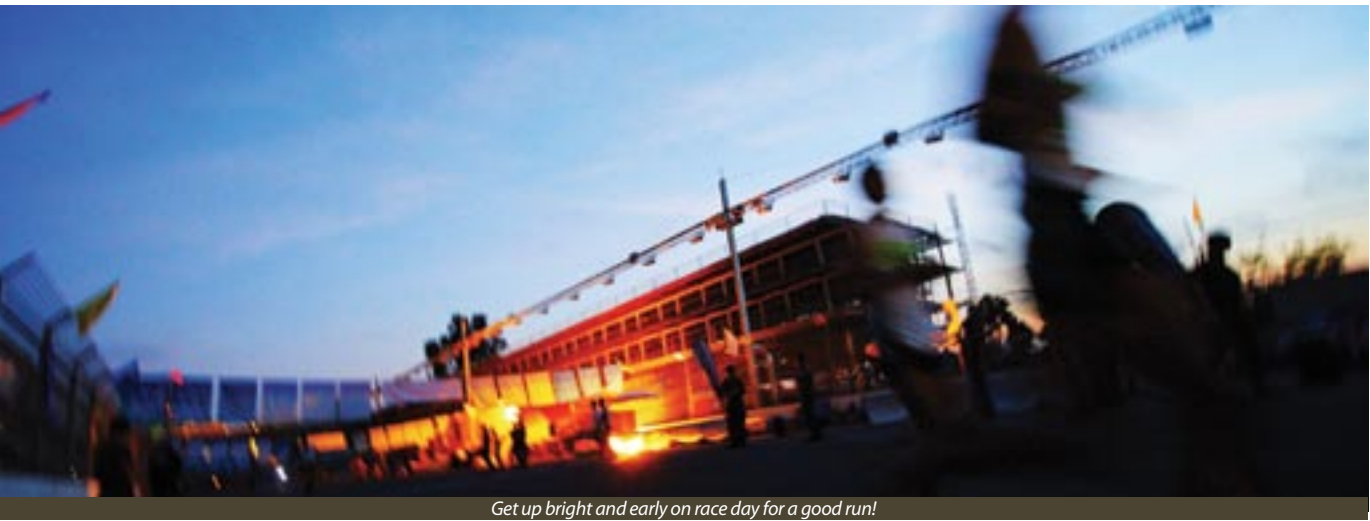
race. A recommended carbohydrate loading cycle is shown in the table that follows:

| Days to Event | Training at 70-85% Maximal Heart Rate | Diet |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 6 | 90 mins | Maximum diet of 50% carbohydrate in diet |
| 5 | 40 mins | |
| 4 | 40 mins | |
| 3 | 20 mins | At least 70% carbohydrate in diet |
| 2 | 20 mins | |
| 1 | REST | |
| Race Day | Race Day | |

At this point, be sure to consume adequate amount of fluids daily. You should also start sleeping half an hour earlier each day. Ensure you get at least seven hours of sleep every night.

One day before Race Day

With only 24 hours left to the big race, be sure to rest your feet as much as possible. Ready and pack your race gear in the



Get up bright and early on race day for a good run!

afternoon to prevent a last minute scramble on the day itself. It might also help to review the race route again to prepare yourself mentally.

For dinner on the evening before the race, avoid fried, spicy and high fibre food. Go instead for a high-carbohydrate, low fibre and low-fat meal. Drink adequately to keep hydrated. And of course, sleep early!

It's Finally Here!

Get up early! Your body will function much better at the starting line if you have been up and moving for two to three hours. As soon as you are awake, have a light breakfast (no fried food) and drink plenty of fluids.

When you gear up, do not put on soiled or unwashed running attire as this may cause abrasions and skin irritations. Race day is also a bad time to try out brand new running shoes and attire. Apply vaseline gel on abrasion prone areas, such as the inner thighs and armpits, to reduce friction during the race. If you tend to sweat profusely, apply anti-perspirant to keep your feet dry and prevent blisters.

Aim to arrive at least one hour early to avoid delay arising from slow traffic and queues at the registration and restrooms. Pin on your race number and fix the time-chip properly. Half an hour before flag off, begin your warm-up with a light jog and some stretching. You are now ready!

During the Race

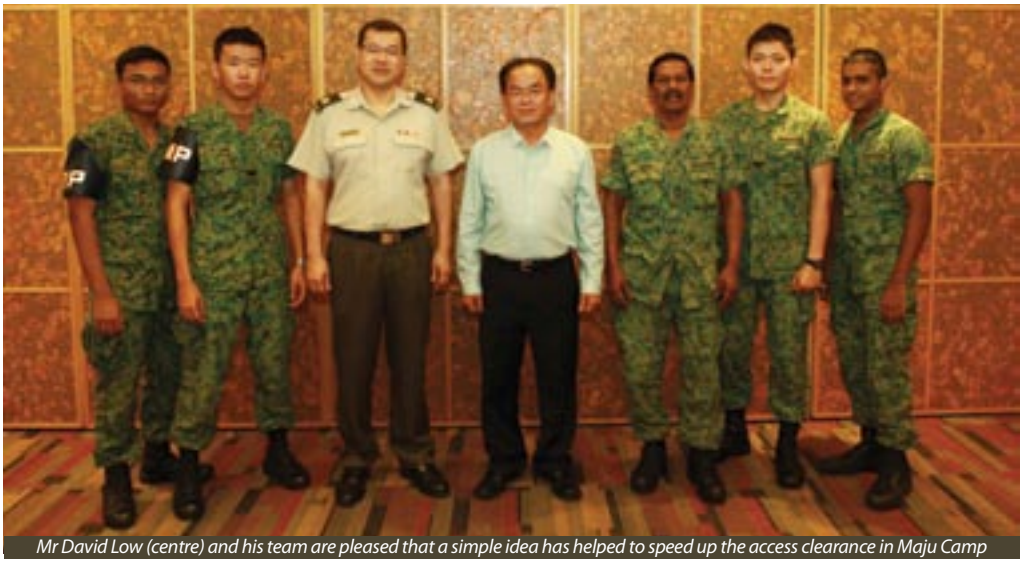
In the heat of the race, do not be caught up with the crowd or an adrenaline rush. Pace yourself according to your own plan. Hydrate yourself with slow sips of isotonic drinks and water at the water-points along the route. Keep your forehead, neck, armpits, arms and chest moist with water at the water points to keep cool. If you necessary, replenish your body with energy gels/bars or bananas mid-way through the run. If you feel a stitch coming on, slow down and take shallow breaths. To tackle the daunting slopes, try taking smaller but faster steps and lean slightly forwards.

Set small goals along the way to motivate yourself, for example keeping pace with someone ahead or reaching a distant lamppost to keep going.

Most importantly - enjoy the run!

Using Technology for Enhanced Access Control

Story by Samuel Cheam / Photography by Mark Ng



Mr David Low (centre) and his team are pleased that a simple idea has helped to speed up the access clearance in Maju Camp

Maju Camp has a Fitness Conditioning Centre (FCC) which witnesses hundreds of NSmen reporting every week either for their Remedial Training (RT) or Individual Physical Proficiency Test (IPPT). Because it is a restricted area, personnel manning the access control had to verify the identity of each NSman entering the camp against voluminous nominal rolls. But since late last year, such an arduous task is now a thing of the past thanks to the new Automated Personnel Access System implemented by the Camp Commandant Mr David Low and his team. The system uses computers and wireless scanners to speed up the booking in process and enhance camp security, and this has increased the efficiency of human traffic flowing in and out of the camp.

The new system was implemented in response to two main problems. The first was the sheer volume of human and vehicular traffic. Due to the FCC, Maju Camp already has to cope with a large number of NSmen reporting for RT and IPPT. The camp also houses a Mobilisation Equipping Centre and the number of reporting NSmen will further swell whenever an equipping exercise is conducted. Combined with the permanent staff strength, the number of people accessing the camp each day is phenomenal. The sheer volume of daily human and vehicular traffic caused traffic jams, delays and inconvenience to NSmen, permanent staff and camp visitors. The camp also had to deploy extra manpower to cope, including stationing two Fitness Specialists at the gate to check each incoming NSman against a nominal roll.

The second problem was one of security. The large volume of personnel entering the



The new electronic Automated Personnel Access System provides a clear and visible photograph of the visitor which enables the camp guard to effectively verify his identity

camp could affect the efficiency of the access checks and lead to unauthorised entry. Mr Low explained, "The key data that the previous system required were name, purpose of visit, handphone number and pass number. However, this system was unable to scan and display the photograph of the person. Thus the guard not be able to positively verify the person's identity."

To tackle these two pressing concerns, Mr Low and his team sourced for several possible solutions. They finally identified a commercial system that solved both their problems easily. The way the Automated Personnel Access System works is simple. Prior to the NSmen coming in for their RT or IPPT, the FCC will provide Mr Low and his security team with their essential details. This information will be digitally captured by the system. Upon the NSmen's arrival at the camp, the camp guards simply scan their identification card and check their identity against the digital records. As the camp guards are now able to quickly and accurately identify the

reporting NSmen, the FCC no longer needs to deploy their Fitness Specialists for access control duties. The new system has expedited the booking in process and eased the human and vehicular congestion at the entrance of Maju Camp.

The new system has significantly enhanced security by providing the camp guards with a clear and visible photograph of the person seeking access into the camp. All first time visitors and permanent staff have their details, which include a photograph, recorded in the system. When an identification card or camp pass is scanned, the holder's photograph will be displayed on the screen which greatly helps the guard to fully verify his or her identity. Because the system also tracks the expiry date of camp passes, those attempting to enter with an invalid pass will be detected.

Mr Low and his team are pleased that a simple idea has indeed translated into much savings, both in money and time. The camp security staff are now able to perform their duties with greater effectiveness and efficiency while the Fitness Specialists are freed to fully focus on their core responsibilities. The smooth entry into camp also brings convenience and contributes to the positive experience of NSmen reporting for their RT and IPPT.

The new system also has one more advantage should a major contagious disease break out and contact tracing is required. With its electronic records readily available, this too can be expediently done.

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Army News thanks Lim Wei Seng for his contributions to Army News. We wish him all the best for his future endeavours!

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Quiz Of The Month - JULY / Issue 178

Send us the correct answer and win a pair of Golden Village movie vouchers. There will be 5 winners!



Closing Date : 6 September 2010

Across

1. MAJ Choy Wai Hong finds his _____ in the Army both professionally and personally fulfilling.
2. Thanks to the new APAS, Maju FCC no longer needs to deploy their _____ Specialists for access control duties*.

Down

3. Taking the SAF Pledge brings back a lot of _____ for Mr Seah Kwee Yong.
4. Executing the Mobile _____ display requires detailed planning and coordination.
5. This year, 45 NSFs from Our Army received the inaugural NSF of the _____ Award.
6. The _____ is the gun of choice for 21 SA.

Rank / Name:

Unit:

NRIC:

E-mail:

Contact No:

1. This contest is open to all Army personnel except the executive staff of Army News Section.
2. Each person is allowed one entry.
3. Prizes are not exchangeable for cash. Winners can either collect their prizes from Army News or arrange for mail delivery.
4. The judges' decision is final. Please send us your entries via mail or email us at armynews@starnet.gov.sg.
5. Prizes not collected within a month of notification will be forfeited.

MAY / Issue 176 Quiz Answers

Answers:
1. TERREX
2. EASY
3. SPORTS

4. NATIONAL
5. TRANSITION
6. CADET

Winners are to contact Army News at 6427 0642 for collection of prizes.

MAY / Issue 176 Winners

1) SWO SIVAKUMAR
2) NEO HOING JIE
3) 35G (NS) KOH SENG KEE
4) ME4 SIM YONG TAI
5) PTE CHEN WEIJIE JEREMY
NRIC: SXXXX665H
NRIC: SXXXX585I
NRIC: SXXXX174A
NRIC: SXXXX613B
NRIC: SXXXX610I

Get the Right Picture on BMT!

Story by Samuel Cheam / Photography by Mark Ng

If you are a parent concerned about how your son will cope with the rigours of military life during his National Service, or a teenager trying to prepare for NS or even a NSman wondering how much the Army has changed, you can check out a video project titled “Every Singaporean Son”. Consisting of 18 episodes, each about six minutes in duration, the series has been available for viewing on the popular video website YouTube



since early July. The various episodes capture the progress of a platoon of recruits in Pulau Tekong from their first day at Basic Military Training to their Passing Out Parade.

The video series follows Platoon One from Orion Company, Basic Military Training Centre School Two, as they transform

from fresh enlistees to soldiers equipped with basic fighting skills. To make the series as realistic and engaging as possible, the film crew made minimal intrusions into the training programme during filming. The show vividly captures some of the key highlights in the BMT programme like physical training, the standard obstacle course and a 7-day field camp. CPT Roger Chen, Officer Commanding of Orion Company views the video as more than just entertainment. He said, “Most of the concerns parents have revolve around training. I believe that this series will help correct any misconceptions about BMT they might have and give them a better understanding of how training is conducted and the safety measures that are in place.”

However, the video series is not a mere documentary on BMT. Rather, it follows in the reality TV genre by adding a human element in the training. Expect to see not just the rigours of BMT but also lighter moments of recruits relaxing in between lessons. Listen to what these young men had to say as they shared their thoughts and feelings during their BMT journey.

To view the videos, simply visit the CyberpioneerTV Channel on Youtube (www.youtube.com/user/cyberpioneerTV).

Army Coins

Identity and Recognition

Story by Marcus Ho / Photography by Derrick Heng

The introduction of coins into military organisations can be dated back to the Second World War in the 20th century where each and every soldier carried a military coin. The purpose of the coin was to create a symbolic identity amongst the soldiers and foster a sense of belonging to the military establishment that they represented. Since then, this practice has entrenched and today, military coins have continued to play an important role in forging an identity amongst servicemen and recognising their achievements.

Similarly, the use of coins has also been deeply embedded into Our Army's military traditions, serving to instil identity and pride amongst our people. To this end, Our Army has formalised the practice with a framework for the design and use of these coins to further signify unity and strengthen the organisation's branding. CPT Chan Eng Soon, a staff officer in Performance and Engagement Office G1-Army elaborated,



“Although we already have an existing coin culture that resides in the respective formations, these coins are not standardised in their size and design. To promote and foster a common identity, Our Army decided that it is important to launch a series of Army Coins that could be used as a tool for strengthening affiliations, within Our Army and with our foreign military partners as well.”

To recognise and further boost the morale of our people for their outstanding performances and achievements, the Commanders' Coins have also been introduced as part of the Army Coins series. CPT Chan revealed, “These coins can be used at various levels from the divisions down to training institutes. They are treasured items as they are limited in quantity and are presented to servicemen who have excelled in their performance.”