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JAT: Building Ties Naturally

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography provided by AFC

"Mountain trekkers around the region often rate Gunung Tahan as one of the most difficult mountains to climb due to its undulating steep slopes. Thus, reaching the summit of Gunung Tahan was an achievement that we can be very proud to have accomplished", shared CPT Rashik, a team leader of the Singaporean delegation at this year's Joint Adventure Training (JAT), held in Pahang, Malaysia. JAT is an annual training held in conjunction with Exercise Semangat Bersatu. JAT aims to promote ties with the Malaysian Army through the participation of soldiers from both armies in non-military activities, such as mountain climbing and white water rafting. This year, each team of 10, comprising soldiers from both armies, covered 40 kilometres of cycling, 20 kilometres of rafting and conquered Gunung Tahan.

IWO Hashim from the Army Fitness Centre (AFC), who was the training coordinator for the exercise, commented on the 1-month centralised training conducted, "We conditioned ourselves for the event so that we could face the physical and mental challenges of the expedition. Since most of the team members had not participated in such activities before, we geared our training towards improving their fitness level so that they would be confident of their own abilities during the exercise."

Training for JAT was certainly gruelling. Participants were put through a set regime with an intensive high-key activity in the morning, followed by a light recovery session in the afternoon. The rigorous training certainly paid off handsomely during JAT, as shared by one participant from AFC, 2LT Benjamin Quah. He shared, "Though the training was arduous and challenging, it proved to be effective when we carried out the actual exercise as we were acclimatised both mentally and physically to the demands of the exercise."

For all their sweat and pain in completing the different components of JAT, the participants now possess fond memories of their experiences with their Malaysian counterparts. CPT Sim Song Kai, a team leader in the expedition, quipped, "In tackling the physical challenges and achieving them together, we could really feel the team spirit among us and the Malaysians." CPT Rashik agreed, "The Malaysians who organised this year's JAT often went out of their way to support us. They were very warm and hospitable, and always looked to make us feel at home."

At the end of the JAT expedition, many cultural exchanges were made. CPT Rashik reflected on one such experience, "The most memorable experience I had was the 'malam akrab', or 'so-

cial night', at the end of the exercise. We shared unique training experiences and reminisced about our time spent together. At the end of night, we were all touched by the different gestures of appreciation. It really exhibited the camaraderie and friendships forged during the expedition as both sides completed a common objective together."



The Malaysian delegation and the Singaporean delegation conquered Gunung Tahan together

SAF Medics Acquire New Skills

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Michael Thing

The opening ceremony of the inaugural SAF Operating Theatre Basic Scrub Medic Course on 31 October saw 20 medics from the Army and the Navy embarking on a new learning journey. Comprising mainly NSMen, the group picked up valuable new skill sets from their trainers from Nanyang Polytechnic's (NYP) School of Health Sciences (SHS) (Nursing). LTC Chua

Thiam Beng, Head of Army Medical Training Centre, SAF Medical Training Institute (SMTI), explained the rationale behind the course. He said, "During their full-time National Service (NSF), medics do not get any training in the skills required to be a scrub medic, that is, a medic helping out in surgery. Completing this 10-day course would equip them with the necessary scrub medic skills."

The course content focussed on crucial skills such as the proper sterilization of surgical instruments, keeping aseptic areas at the operating table sterile and the proper technique of handwashing. CPL (NS) Ng Kok Ping, a participant, shared, "The course had a clear structure, and it was definitely enriching as I now know the role of each personnel in the operating theatre."

Thus, it can be seen that this training partnership between NYP and AMS has proven to be a mutually beneficial one. Dr Chow Yeow Leng, Deputy Director of Continuing Education and Training of SHS (Nursing) NYP, elaborated, "Through our visit to SMTI recently, we were able to observe first-hand an Army surgical unit operating in the field. From there, we ex-



CPL (NS) Ng Kok Ping (right) learning the necessary skills from the trainer

changed ideas and came up with the most relevant skills to impart to the medics."

This synergistic relationship was also felt by LTC Chua, and to him, it allowed the expedient "cross-pollination of ideas". He reflected, "Through this cross-pollination, we were able to tap on the specialized knowledge of NYP, allowing us to refresh our current procedures and processes. This adds value to the course, as not only are our medics trained, but our perspectives are also broadened significantly."

Looking ahead to the future, LTC (Dr) Chua Wei Chong, Deputy Chief Army Medical Officer commented, "Given that our NSF medics do not currently possess scrub medic skills, this course with NYP will extend the opportunities for our medics to be trained in these skills even before they ORD. Working with NYP will allow our skills to be benchmarked and accredited with the medical industry's standards. By collaborating with the tertiary institution that churns out the bulk of nurses in Singapore, we can be sure that our medics will be well-prepared for their future vocations in the combat surgical units."

Defence Tech X: Showcasing Our Cutting Edge

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Sebastian Ang

Visitors to the Singapore Science Centre from 7 to 11 November enjoyed an array of intriguing and informative defence exhibits which gave a fresh perspective to the phrase, "At the Cutting Edge". This was the theme of Defence Tech X, held in conjunction with the annual Defence Technology Prize. The exhibition showcased the cutting edge technology that the 3rd Generation SAF utilises to enhance its operational capabilities.

This aim was very much in line with the National Education perspective in the curricula of many schools. It was thus of no surprise to see hordes of students enjoying the fascinating displays at the exhibition. "The exhibition provided good exposure for the students to witness the role of technology in defence. This is a niche area in our National Education, and as such, we are very glad to have been given the opportunity to witness the impressive displays put up," explained Mrs Siti Noor, a teacher in North Spring Primary School.

Many students found the exhibits highly beneficial and meaningful to their education as well. For them, the exhibition was a fine platform to give them a feel of how a military operates. Vanessa Koh, a Primary 6 student from Juying Primary, who participated in the interactive Urban Operations segment, ex-



Students having their Urban Operations experience

plained, "I managed to get a feel of the many weapons that the Army uses and also learnt more about the different capabilities of our Army." Having participated in the segment which gave visitors a taste of the experience of a soldier involved in urban operations, Vanessa was given the opportunity to hold a rifle for the first time. She laughed, "It was heavy at first, but then it eventually became more fun to use, especially when I could shoot at a target!"

For 3SG David Wong, an NSF representative at the exhibition, affirmed the importance of defence for our island nation. He reflected, "Through the showcasing of the latest technology and 3rd Generation capabilities of our Army, it was heartening to see that each visitor went away with the understanding of the importance of our Army's constant transformation and the need for a modern and relevant Army to protect our nation."



3SG David Wong (right) demonstrating our Army's capabilities to a student

MIP: Understanding the Bigger Picture

Story by Tham Wei Yang / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei & Sebastian Ang



A rare opportunity to get up close with our Army's hardware

Office Intern: Coffee-boy; endless stacks of documents to photocopy; mindless data-entry.

MINDEF Intern: Three days of non-stop excitement and engagement with our Army's commanders and latest fighting platforms.

That, in essence, was the experience of 76 JC1 students and 73 JC2 students who participated in the MINDEF Internship Program (MIP) from 26-28 November and 9-11 December respectively. Jointly organised by the MINDEF Scholarship Centre and Army, Air Force, and Navy Recruitment Centres, the MIP is running for its second consecutive year. It aims to give these students a wider perspective of the SAF and, in the words of MAJ Iain Hoo, Head Army Recruitment Centre, "a better understanding of how it supports the other four pillars of defence." The effort was also supported by HQ Armour, 9th Singapore Division/Infantry and the Commandos.

For Shubit Mohan Singh of Anglo-Chinese School (Independent), one of the highlights of the JC1 program was the live-firing demonstration of BIONIX vehicles mounted with the 40mm Automatic Grenade Launcher. It was the first time many of the participants had witnessed such heavy firepower in person, and they were left in awe of the rapid destruction of the firing targets. In fact, they had an even more intimate experience with the 0.5" Heavy Machine Gun after the demonstration: a chance to fire

live rounds from the vehicles they had just seen in action. More than fun and games, it brought home the "magnitude and reality of the situation on the battlefield" to Shubit and his peers.

From the physical reality of the military, participants were introduced to the virtual world of war gaming. Deep inside SAFTI Military Institute, where many Army leadership training institutions reside, the JC1 students had a taste of what it is like to be a commander. They were split into two sides and, using their knowledge of military assets they had only seen one to two days ago, were tasked to outwit each other in a virtual battle.

Though it is often tempting to simplistically describe virtual war gaming as another version of "Command and Conquer", a popular real-time strategy computer game, Hwa Chong Institution's Li Jianrui would beg to differ after this experience. "The software incorporates many real-life factors, such as shorter travelling times for units that travel by road. There are so many variables involved that one has to plan and think ahead in detail."

Chen Wei Jian of Raffles Junior College added, "This being our first time (taking part in a war game), we sometimes found ourselves groping in the dark even with factors such as supplies being taken out of play. But commanders have to deal with a more complex version of the system which requires that they be decisive and mentally strong."

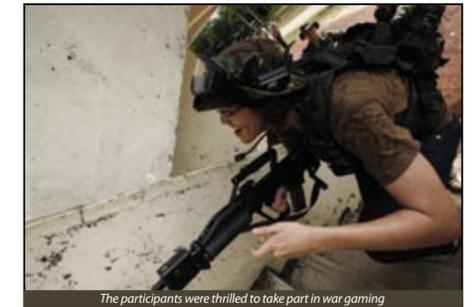
Some of the participants in the JC2 program had the opportunity to be in the war gaming hot seat last year; this time, they entered the heat of the battle in an urban assault rescue mission held in Area E, FIBUA. The students were split into two platoons, each facing off with the soldiers of 3rd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment in an operation to rescue hostages and eliminate the 'terrorist chief'.

The 'on-the-ground' experience was invaluable for many. As Su Jun from Raffles Junior College put it, "Smelling the smoke and seeing the enemy really brings across the reality of the battlefield even in a simulation."

Throughout the program, the participants saw upfront and occasionally tried out the latest technology in the SAF including the Turret Training Crew, which is used to train Leopard Crewmen, and the Table-Top Trainer. However, they also learnt to appreciate the importance of the people behind the comprehensive array of assets. As MAJ Hoo explained, "We had the junior leadership interact with the participants to give them a perspective of a soldier who is still training and growing. The senior leadership, on the other hand, was invited to share their experience as people who have been in the organisation for a long time."

Both the JC1 and JC2 participants were in no doubt that they had learnt a great deal about the military. Chua Xianyi, a JC2 student from ACS(I), observed, "The military is a place of change and the challenges of the job are multi-faceted. The people we met showed us that it takes passion and a great sense of duty to serve in the SAF."

The MIP also helped students such as Jason Lee alter their perceptions about military life. The JC1 student from Victoria Junior College explained, "I used to think that the Army is just a place with very strict rules. However, meeting people who are really committed to their jobs has given me more motivation to serve when the time comes."



The participants were thrilled to take part in war gaming

NCC Teachers Get a Taste of NS

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong

"I'm enjoying the experience! I've never been to NS and so this course has given me a rare chance to handle weapons and learn field craft such as building a basha" said National Cadet Corps (NCC) OCT Eunice Tan, a literature teacher from Changkat Changi Secondary school. NCC OCT Tan, together with 79 teachers from various other schools were undergoing a 16-day course which would equip them to become NCC Officers in charge of the Co-Curricular Activity in their schools.

As part of their course, the teachers even got a chance to observe 1st Guards Battalion execute a platoon live-firing exercise on 7 November. This close-up experience was part HQ NCC's National Education efforts to give teachers a first hand feel of what NS training entails. Head Training Cadre MAJ (NCC) Lawrence Chua said, "Our objective is to train teachers to become SAF ambassadors. Besides this field visit, they will also be visiting the Infantry Gunnery Training Simulator to understand how the 3rd Generation SAF trains." Such an approach certainly benefited NCC OCT Colin Tiang from Bedok Green Secondary School, who was a Specialist in an Armour unit during his NSF days. Feeling quite nostalgic about reliving what he had experienced 10 years ago, he also said, "The NCC Course

complements my time in NS, giving me a clearer picture of the latest developments in the SAF."

The course also served to deepen the commitment to defence amongst the teachers. Mr V Pachaiperumal is a Mother Tongue teacher from Fuchun Secondary school who just received his Singaporean citizenship last year. Although he was initially worried about handling weapons such as the SAR 21, Mr Pachaiperumal soon felt comfortable with the weapon as he happily declared, "Like what I tell my students, practice makes perfect." He also added, "In any country, patriotism is very important. We must therefore be loyal to the nation and defend it. I'm eager to learn much about Singapore and



Mr Pachaiperumal found the NCC event to be both informative and enjoyable

I'm thus very willing to attend future courses as I know that it will ultimately benefit my students!"

This eager attitude was certainly what MAJ (NCC) Chua hoped to achieve. He elaborated, "Teachers are a very important force multiplier of the National Education message. They are in the best position to explain it to the students and will thus truly add value in preparing students for NS."



NCC OCTs working on their projects after witnessing a battalion live-firing

Pinning Down the Problem Fixing the 32-Pin Connector

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Jonathan Ong / Graphics contributed by 2WO Yap

"We wanted to speed up our working processes and repair the radio amplifier set's 32-Pin Connectors faster. This would ensure that we meet the operational demands of units using the equipment and ease our own workload" said 2WO Yap Kim Fui, a Communications Master Technician at HQ Maintenance and Engineering Support. With an innovative spirit and a positive desire to enhance productivity, 2WO Yap and his team from the Maintenance Support Section (MSS) came up with a creative solution to save time and cut costs in the repair of 32-Pin amplifier connectors used on signal sets.

Previously, when these 32-Pin Connectors were damaged, they took 30 days to be replaced by the contractor, a time period too long for units which require the signal sets for basic communication. Even though the 32-Pin connector is only slightly larger than a 50 cent coin, it plays an important role in meeting the operational demands of everyday training across the three services. Thus, with an average of 24 32-Pin Connectors coming in for repair each month, 2WO Yap knew that the rate of replacement and repair needed to be much faster. He thus led the team to examine the root cause of the problem by running numerous tests on the equipment. What they found, was that not all 32 pins of the connector were used, and that non-essential pins which had been damaged could be easily cut off. Out of an average of 24 sets sent in for repair, there were 17 sets where non-essential pins had been damaged. These sets could thus be

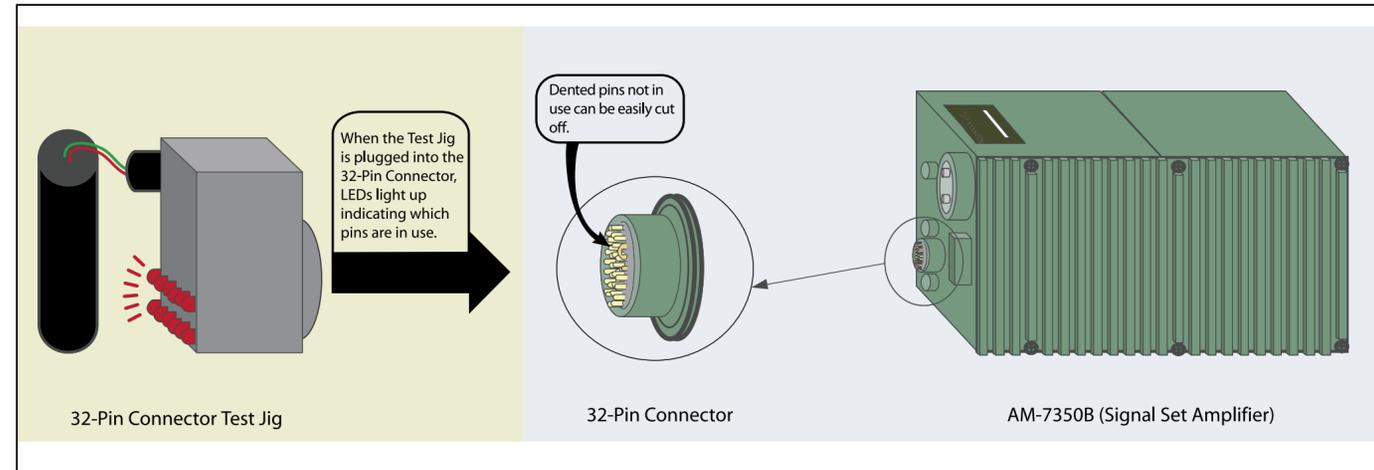
quickly returned to the unit as not the whole 32-Pin connector would have to be replaced.

This method for testing working pins however still required two men and half an hour to complete. It was also a tedious task looking for the right pins to test on the small surface of the connector. 2WO Yap thus went to the drawing board. Utilising his training as a Communications Master Technician, he devised a simple and cost effective tester called the "32-Pin Test Jig". Within minutes, the 32-Pin Test Jig can be attached to the connector of the amplifier. Light emitting diodes on the 32-Pin Test Jig then light up to indicate which of the pins are in use. If only non-essential pins are damaged, they are cut off and the set is sent for additional tests to ensure that its full functionality. This process enables signal sets to be returned to units within 7 days, a drastic improvement from the previous aim of 21. Besides saving time, the innovation is also highly cost effective as the 32-Pin Test Jig is made from recyclable materials. Furthermore, by not replacing the whole 32-Pin connector, MES saves over \$604 for each 32-Pin connector that does not need to be replaced. With an estimated of 204 cases in a year which may not need replacement, MES can save more than \$123 000 in a year.

Sharing his thoughts on the project, 2WO Yap said, "We started with just wanting to cut down the time we needed to take before returning the set to the users. Little did we know that it



would be so drastic with this much time and cost savings." Team leader, SSG Lim Seow Ping echoed this point saying, "Wanting to return the equipment faster was the trigger point for the innovation. We had to ensure that a unit's normal routine work was not delayed for too long." With such a practical yet creative solution, it is no wonder that the team took home the Gold Award at the National IQC Convention 2008. The team is however not content to rest on their laurels. Looking ahead, 2WO Yap said, "We plan to extend such methods for equipment testing to more communication devices. Hopefully such an approach will lead to faster repair times as we support the operational requirements of units."



Recognising our People's Contributions

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

The MINDEF auditorium was filled with a buzz on 24 November as servicemen from all the services gathered for the National Day Awards Ceremony. The ceremony saw Minister of State for Defence Koo Tsai Kee presenting 55 Commendation Medals, 123 Efficiency Medals and 470 Long Service Medals to our servicemen. The medals were in recognition of these servicemen's strong performance and dedication to the call of duty.

One recipient of the Efficiency Medal is Chief Fitness Specialist at HQ Basic Military Training Centre, 1WO Mohamed Suhaimy. He said, "I feel happy and proud to be one of the recipients. Ultimately, this medal is a testament to the Warrant Officers and Specialist Corps' efforts in my unit and I am truly glad to have played my part." 1WO Suhaimy has made significant contributions in the review of the Standard Obstacle Course Syllabus and continues to pursue excellence in all his endeavours.

He elaborated, "I continue to excel because of the job satisfaction I get and the whole-heartedly commitment I have to my tasks. I am certainly honoured to receive the award and hope that I can be a role model for junior servicemen."

This attitude was shared by other recipients, regulars and NS-men alike. LTC (VOL) Munisamy Silvarajoo was one of the many NS commanders recognised for their outstanding contributions. He shared, "As long as I'm fit and my body allows me to do it, I will continue to serve my country with pride. I have lots of experience which I want to share with the junior officers. I believe that the sharing of personal anecdotes will stick in the minds of my men and deepen their commitment to defence." With such a dedicated mindset which focusses on nurturing the next generation, it is no doubt that the quality of our people will continue to grow from strength to strength.



As It Happened Wallaby '08

Photography by Chia Han Sheng & Ian Cheong

Exercise Wallaby '08 marked the debut of many new platforms such as the Leopard 2A4 MBTs, the mUAVs and the ALTaCC. Army News brings you vignettes of life in Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Rockhampton.

In Commander 6th Singapore Division, COL Ishak's fitting description, "The heart of each exercise is in our people. It is with their effort that we can fulfill our common objective."



- a. Our M113s rolling out for action
- b. The Minister for Defence from Australia and Singapore being briefed on the Leopard 2A4 MBTs
- c. The "eye in the sky" ready for take-off
- d. A Forward Support Group (FSG) technician providing on-site maintenance
- e. Lasting memories from the awesome display of firepower
- f. An Apache Attack Helicopter unleashing its Hellfire missile
- g. Our Leopard in its natural environment

Wallaby '08

New Horizons in Air-Land Integration

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Chia Han Sheng and Ian Cheong



"In many ways, air-land integration was brought to a higher level as we managed to integrate complex manoeuvres into current tactics. Given that today's enemy is dynamic and mobile, our enhanced air-land integration gives us the extra edge to deny them the ability and chance to strike us first. With the new range of capabilities available to us, we are able to adopt more effective tactics to fulfil our mission objectives."

COL Ishak bin Ismail,
Commander
6th Singapore Division /
Exercise Director of Wallaby '08

Rockhampton, a peaceful and serene town nestled in Queensland, Australia undergoes a drastic transformation every October. For a period spanning two months, Shoalwater Bay Training Area, located within close proximity of Rockhampton, is the setting for the SAF to conduct its air-land integration drills. During the drills, land elements from the Army and air elements from the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) combine to devastating effect. Throughout the exercise, the menacing rumble of armoured vehicles, and ferocious howl of fighter jets are frequently heard.

This year's Exercise Wallaby was no exception. Featuring the myriad capabilities from our new technologies, the Leopard 2A4 Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) and Air-Land Tactical Command Centre (ALTaCC) were just some of the equipment deployed during the Exercise, which ultimately culminated in an awe-inspiring demonstration of combined firepower on 25 October. Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean and the Australian Minister for Defence Joel Fitzgibbon were present to witness an assault on a common target involving F-16 Fighter Aircraft, Apache Attack Helicopters, M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers, Pegasus Singapore Light-Weight Howitzers and the newly unleashed Leopard 2A4 MBTs.



Minister Teo and Minister Fitzgibbon interacting with the men involved in Exercise Wallaby '08

Integrating the Air and the Land

For COL Ishak bin Ismail, Commander, 6th Singapore Division and Exercise Director, the successful execution of these enhanced capabilities is a good reflection of the forward vision and creativity of our people. He commented, "We have to constantly design new scenarios that are plausible. This way, our mental models will always be renewed as we have to constantly devise new solutions to connect both elements for every scenario. In moving ahead of the times, we ensure our operational readiness for any situation."

Certainly, this creativity and dynamism that COL Ishak expounded upon was a big driving force to the exercise's success. Besides demonstrating the SAF's capabilities, Wallaby '08 also highlighted the strength of our people. Army News teleports you back to October in the bustling Shoalwater Bay Training Area.

Providing One Common Operating Image

One aspect of the heightened air-land integration is the ALTaCC, a component of the RSAF's Participation Command. LTC Thirunakka Devan, the Role Detachment Commander for ALTaCC, elaborated on the key benefits of this integration, "With this technology, we are able to connect into one fused picture, thus allowing us a greater field situational awareness as we are able to put both the field and the airspace onto one common operating image. In SAF missions, it will heighten the decision-making process as it allows the division and the forces in the air to have real-time command and control over the situation."



The ALTaCC connects both air and land elements into one fused picture

Kicking Up A Storm

Another capability tested at Wallaby '08 was infantry motorisation. Our soldiers from the 1st Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (1 SIR), were at the forefront of this new thrust, leveraging on the exercise to build on their proficiency in motorisation infantry training. By motorising our infantry forces, our Army provides soldiers with greater mobility and protection, and this in turn enhances their survivability. It was not an uncommon sight to see a motorised infantry section charging out from each of the 13 M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) deployed, quickly forming up for battle. CPT Spenser Chen, Officer Commanding of 'A' Company in 1 SIR elaborated on the practice of such drills at the Exercise, "By executing and practising the motorisation drills now, we have a headstart in our infantry motorisation proficiencies even before we acquire the actual platform."



Our soldiers from 1 SIR preparing for their training

Infantry motorisation provides highly valued mobility for our Infantrymen by transporting them from one location to another using APCs. With support from a Motorised Support Unit (MSU), our Infantry no longer need to cover vast distances on foot to reach their intended location. Arriving safely at where they are needed most, the soldiers are ready for immediate action.



The M113s all geared up and ready to go

Besides mobility, the utilisation of the armoured vehicles has given our Infantry some Armoured capabilities. 2LT Poh Chen Wei, Platoon Commander of the MSU Platoon explained, "With Armoured vehicles behind them, our Infantry is equipped with greater mobility, protection and firepower. This allows us to fight more effectively and incisively."

Logisticians Making Things Happen



Our Leopard 2A4 MBTs and M113s combine to provide devastating firepower

A Force Multiplier

The success of air-land integration at Exercise Wallaby '08 certainly goes a long way in paving the way for future operations. As a Leopard 2A4 Main Battle Tank commander, CPT Cai De Xian, Platoon Commander from 48th Singapore Armoured Regiment (48 SAR), firmly believes in the immense potential waiting to be unleashed. He shared, "Working together with

the air elements will give us the ability to acquire targets at a much greater range. Through this, we understand the ground a lot better and thereby know the kind of enemy we are facing. Thus, communicating with the air and working together with them will serve as a force multiplier for us. This is definitely an exciting prospect to look forward to."

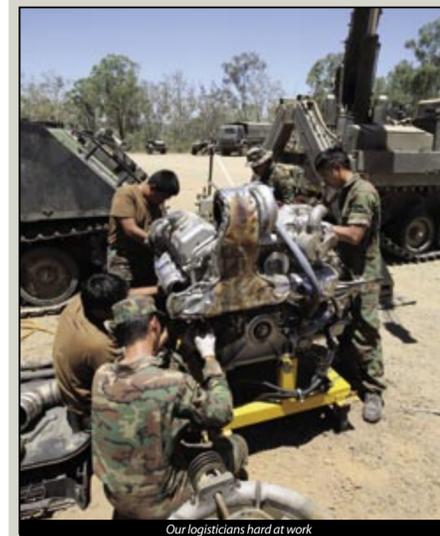
Given the massive scale of the exercise, our logisticians from the Forward Support Group (FSG) had the daunting challenge of transforming Shoalwater Bay Training Area into an operationally-ready environment. MAJ Tong Chee Wai, shed light on some of the roles the FSG undertook, "We had to support the troops in various complex logistical requirements such as the maintenance of vehicles and supply of rations, so that the participating troops could fully focus on their training." Comprising the Maintenance Team and the Transport Team, the FSG worked tirelessly to keep the gears of the exercise turning.

For the Transport Team, their role was to oversee the large number of vehicles deployed. As such, safety was of paramount importance. Such safety measures included ensuring that all Vehicle Commanders were familiar with their responsibilities and that all drivers possessed the required qualifications.

In addition, this year's exercise also saw the implementation of the Individual Vehicle Tracking (IVT) system, which records the speeds of the vehicles in the Training Area. This is achieved through a monitoring antenna on each vehicle which transmits the speed information to a data logger at the HQ SSG Koh Hock Siong, a member of the Transport Team, explained, "When the drivers know that we are monitoring their speed limit, they are less likely to go over imposed speed limit of 40 km/h. This decreases the likelihood of accidents and heightens the safety in the area."

For the Maintenance Team, their work began months earlier, when they prepared the various equipment for shipping to Shoalwater Bay Training Area. Arriving on 21 September, a good two weeks before the actual start of the Exercise, the team had to ensure that our equipment passed through the required checks by the Australian authorities and were ready for deployment.

IWO Wong Chee Kong, a member of the Maintenance Team, elaborated, "As we were far from home, we had to ensure that the equipment we brought would be able to adequately maintain the vehicles. We did this by creating a list of the common defects encountered over the years and compiled a list of the relevant information." On top of the thorough preparations, the team also had to turn over the vehicles within the shortest time. This posed some challenges for the team. IWO Wong shared, "Though there was fatigue in many instances, we wanted to fulfil our mission objective of having 100% serviceability for each equipment and also in supporting the exercise to the best of our abilities."



Our logisticians hard at work

A Passion for Training: COL Ng Wai Kit

Story by Tan Wee Meng / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei



"Wow! That's a heavy responsibility that the Army has entrusted on me." This was the first thought that hit COL Ng Wai Kit when he was appointed Assistant Chief of General Staff (Training) in August last year. Army News interviewed him to find out more.

Army News: Can you share with us your thoughts as ACGS (Training)?

COL Ng: Training is a big portfolio. It touches many soldiers, as more than 20,000 flow through our training system annually. About two-thirds of the Army is involved in training activities, that consumes a significant amount of the Army's time, attention and resources. Furthermore, training is the key touchpoint that defines a soldier's experience in the Army. Therefore, it is imperative that our training is conducted efficiently, effectively and meaningfully. It is impossible to do this top down. Although the ACGS(Training), together with Comd TRADOC, has leadership role for Army's training, for the training machinery to work, everyone needs to see themselves as a leader in their own right. I believe each one of us has the capacity to lead and there are countless opportunities to make a difference. We need to seize these opportunities to bring the whole training community to greater heights. After all, it only takes a pebble to start an avalanche.

Army News: How has your previous Weapons Staff background enhanced your professional development?

COL Ng: I was trained in the Royal Military College of Science (RMCS) in UK prior to my Weapons Staff tour. The Masters program taught me project management, weapons design, battlefield systems, modeling and simulations for the training,

and more importantly, that capabilities are realised by a close coupling between men and his machines. The course, and my subsequent Weapons Staff tour, gave me a good grounding on bringing concepts to capabilities. This is of great help to me as ACGS(Training) since G6-Army is part of the Capability Development Hub, serving as the bridge to Training Hub. Whilst TRADOC focuses on the execution of current training, G6-Army conceptualises, articulates and builds the next generation training systems and facilities to realise the full spectrum capabilities of the 3rd Generation Army.

Army News: As our Army continues to transform, new platforms, systems and facilities have been or will be launched in the near future. Can you share with us the impact of these developments and how our training will be transformed?

COL Ng: As you know, training is a fundamental input to capability. It is the trained soldiers and leaders that will unleash the full potential of our weapons and systems. Therefore, Army's transformation into a 3rd Gen force requires a lockstep transformation of our training facilities, pedagogies and systems. The training transformation roadmap has been written and will be executed over the next few years. Briefly, the training transformation will enable cost-effective training of the full spectrum force with high training fidelity; and set in place the learning systems and structures for self-discovery and collaborative learning throughout the Army.

Army News: As our Army progresses towards a full-spectrum force, what do you think are the main training challenges in ensuring that we are ever ready, relevant and decisive?

COL Ng: Firstly, training time is always limited as our Army is largely a conscript force. We need to optimise the training time of our NSF's and NSmen. Training needs to be efficient, outcome-based and tailored. Soldiers and leaders need to embrace life-long learning; and informal learning at their own time and place. Second challenge is that of resources. We need to build more simulators, better develop our local training land and secure more overseas training areas. Thirdly, as the future battlespace will be more complex, volatile and uncertain, training systems will need to closely model this in sufficient fidelity for training to be meaningful and for the correct lessons to be learnt. Another key challenge is our new generation of soldiers grew up with iPods, computers, and Play-Stations. Their learning expectations are different. They learn differently. The challenge is to enrich our learning spaces so that these soldiers will remain engaged, challenged and be able to learn effectively.

Army News: In mid-2008, you had returned from a one-year Army War College & International Fellows Program at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania USA. Please share with us the main highlights of this course.

COL Ng: This is a key military program for senior officers, both internationally and from the US. It is an excellent program that enables senior leaders to appreciate the complexity of policy and strategy; the inter-agency co-operation required in the application of smart power; and the difficulties in translating policies and strategies into operational plans in a volatile and ambiguous environment. Through this program, I was able to better understand the strategic culture and thinking of the US military, and networked with fellow participants who are all potential senior leaders. This course has impressed on me that the world has become a far more complex place. Wars are no longer cleanly defined. Neither is victory. Military power alone is not the solution. Winning the information war, and establishing moral high ground, is just as important as winning the kinetic war. But the crux of it all, is that winning requires good leaders at all levels, that are competent, confident and passionate.

Army News: On a lighter note, please share with us your life philosophy and life outside work.

COL Ng: Don't take life too seriously. Being able to laugh at oneself is a great ability. There is a funny side to every situation. Many things, if held too tight, like sand, will slip away from your hands. Cherish relationships and spend time to build on them. As they say, no road is long with good company. Family to me is most important. When all is said and done, they will be the ones that remain. Experiment, don't be afraid to fail. But be prudent. When testing the depth of the river, don't jump in with both feet.

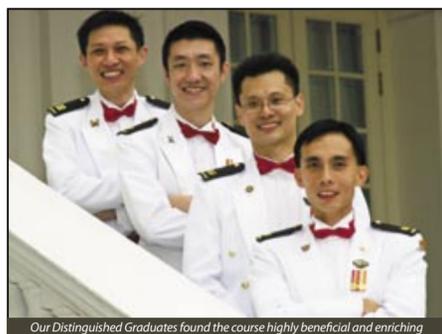
"I believe each one of us has the capacity to lead and there are countless opportunities to make a difference. We need to seize these opportunities to bring the whole training community to greater heights. After all, it only takes a pebble to start an avalanche."

COL Ng Wai Kit
ACGS (Training)

Ready To Lead

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Michael Thng

"This batch of graduates consists of enthusiastic and dedicated NS officers who came together to learn from each other and benefit mutually. The best thing about it was that there was a complete absence of selfishness during the course and we therefore truly enjoyed ourselves" said CPT (NS) Chin Piao, one of the Distinguished Graduate Award Winners from the 9th NS Command and Staff Course. In total, 30 NS Commanders graduated



Our Distinguished Graduates found the course highly beneficial and enriching

at a ceremony held at the Istana on 21 November, marking the culmination of more than eight months of hard work. Equipped with these new skills and knowledge, these NS commanders will be taking on higher responsibilities as battalion commanders and brigade principal staff officers in SAF units.

Participants had to complete a 7-month correspondence course before attending a 5-week residential phase at the Singapore Command and Staff College (SCSC). Besides enhancing their leadership skills and furthering their military knowledge, the course included modules on policy studies to equip officers with the knowledge necessary for higher appointments. Distinguished Graduate, Battalion 2nd in Command, 755th Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment, MAJ (NS) Chua Kim Peng was highly enriched by the course. He said, "There has never been a time that I've left a SAF course without solid takeaways. From this course, I feel that my professional competency has increased, personal development enriched and commitment to defence deepened."

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence Ng Eng Hen emphasised that "the motivation to defend Singapore must start from the heart and needs the support of family members, employers and the Singaporean

society at large." Top Graduate MAJ (NS) Michael Hua from 688th Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment fully agreed when he commented, "Excelling in our NS commitments is not just our own effort. Having supportive employers and family members truly eases the burden on us."

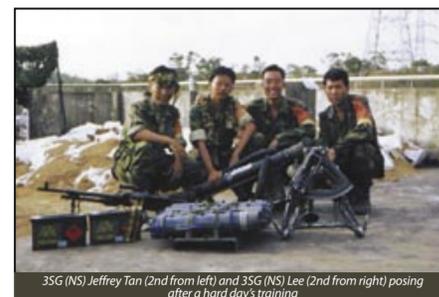


MAJ (NS) Hua is truly appreciative of his family's support for his NS commitments

An NS Unit's Pride

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Michael Thng & 3SG (NS) Edmund Lee

"I remember our missions, especially the dawn attacks. We would march from the start point to our objective and be way ahead of the meeting time. If you mention this walking speed to anyone from 596th Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (596 SIR) they'll know what I mean" said 3SG (NS) Edmund Lee, an 84-mm Recoilless Rifle Section Commander from Alpha Company. 3SG (NS) Lee is a commander who is tremendously proud of the unit which from its active days, has won numerous accolades such as Best Combat Unit, Best Infantry Unit and six Best NS Unit Awards. As 596 SIR prepares to enter the MINDEF Reserves in April 2009, 3SG (NS) Lee and his 2IC, 3SG (NS) Jeffrey Tan shared with Army News the many fond memories that they have had with the unit.



3SG (NS) Jeffrey Tan (2nd from left) and 3SG (NS) Lee (2nd from right) posing after a hard day's training

For 3SG (NS) Lee, his most positive experiences have come during times of tough training exercises with the unit. He shared, "I remember a 2003 overseas exercise where we had a very tall mountain to execute a mission on. Despite the harsh environment, I am proud to say that we showed our umpires and aggressors that the battalion still had the ability to withstand the tough conditions even after our active days." For 3SG (NS) Tan, this fighting spirit and commitment to defence boils down to one word - "pride". He elaborated, "When you're up there, it's up to you whether you want to lay back or to give your best. However, I believe that your NS performance is often a testament to the kind of person that you are in the outside world. Because of this personal pride and respect for what we do, we always give our best whatever the task."

This personal pride and commitment to excellence was certainly contagious during their NS days. While men and commanders from their active unit formed the bulk of 596 SIR after their full-time service, there were many additional members from other units who arrived to join the NS unit. 3SG (NS) Tan elaborated, "Even though many were from other units during their NSF days, they all came to play an integral part in 596 SIR. The pride and excellence displayed during their active NS days rubbed off on them and we developed a common desire for excellence and camaraderie during our NS cycle." 3SG (NS) Tan also mentioned that the secret to developing a committed NS unit is to lay the foundation for dedication early during the soldiers' NSF days.



3SG (NS) Lee (right) and 3SG (NS) Tan developed close bonds while leading their section together

Having seen the whole process of a tremendously successful NS unit, 3SG (NS) Lee has some words of advice for units undergoing their early stages of the NS cycle. He shared, "Every NSman is trying to build something at a point of our lives. Whether it is a career or family, there's always something calling for our attention. At the same time, we know that we have to fulfil our NS commitments. Knowing that all your camp mates are also back with whatever issues they have in their lives will motivate and encourage you to just come back and do what you need to do."

New NS Battalion Builds Its Foundation

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

733rd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (733 SIR), led by LTC (NS) Foo Chek Boon, was recently mobilised for its second In-Camp Training (ICT) in December. Being a battalion in its formative years, there are indeed challenges. Given that this was their second ICT, their challenge was to ground the battalion in the special area of their operations. This means that they not only had to get their foundation correct, but also learn the new skills and procedures that would prepare them adequately for the ATEC evaluation in their 5th ICT cycle.

Besides honing their war fighting skills, 733 SIR also needed to quickly gel into a single cohesive force. As the battalion compris-

es soldiers drawn from different sub-units, this is a critical task. LTA (NS) Goh Seng Wee, Officer Commanding of Support Company, explained, "Even if the personnel were from 4 SIR during their NSF days, they would be holding a new appointment in 733 SIR now. As a second-year battalion, we have to gel together quickly so as to ensure that we can fulfil our mission objective." LTA (NS) Fadzuli, a Platoon Commander in Alpha Company, is one such commander with a new appointment. He shared, "Since I am new to the company, it is important that I get to know my men better and build up a strong rapport with my men, so that we can function cohesively as one platoon."



The soldiers from 733 SIR learnt skills that would equip them adequately for the ATEC Evaluation in their 5th NS Cycle

For men and commanders alike, their very first high-key ICT was the perfect opportunity to refresh and build on their current skill sets. 3SG (NS) Benjamin Tan, a Section Commander in Alpha Company said, "Coming back to this ICT, I realised that some of the skills that used to be at the tip of my fingers were no longer so familiar. I also observed that my personal fitness has deteriorated after my ORD. This ICT was crucial in helping me to refresh the skills I picked up in the Army." 3SG (NS) Tan is not the only one in 733 SIR with such a positive attitude towards his training. LTA (NS) Goh revealed that many of the soldiers in 733 SIR have even volunteered to attend courses deemed necessary for their appointments. He said, "After this ICT, many of us in the battalion have been inspired to upgrade their skills so as to ensure that they can carry out their duties to the best of their abilities."

This positive attitude and enthusiasm were very much evident and reflected in the dedication and commitment shown throughout their 2-week ICT. 3SG (NS) James Chan, also a Section Commander in Alpha Company, effused, "One of our motivations for this ICT is to re-live our Army days again, bonding and chatting with the friends made. Another is to ensure that we meet the mission objective successfully and maintain the mentality of training together so that we can defend our country."

As this was their first-ever High Key ICT, many commanders went out of their way to imbue this mentality into their men. LTA (NS) Conan Wong, Officer Commanding of Alpha Company shed light on this. He said, "I shared with my company that we could use this opportunity to improve our fitness and also to reconnect with the friends we made in our NSF days. This way, the high-key activities will no longer seem so difficult, especially when completed together with good friends."

733 SIR is part of the 30th Singapore Infantry Brigade (30 SIB). LTC (NS) Laurence Goh, the Brigade Commander of 30 SIB, who was closely monitoring their training over the ICT, has seen enough during the two weeks to convince himself that 733 SIR is on track in its NS journey. He said, "I am able to observe their strengths and weaknesses throughout their ICT. I am confident that if they continue to show that high spirit and train hard, we can absolutely rely on this battalion to defend us in a war."

Sergeant Apprehends Flasher

Story and Photography by Chia Han Sheng

7 September started off as just another uneventful Sunday morning for 1SG Terrence Yu, a Platoon Sergeant at Basic Military Training Centre's Mohawk Company. Having completed his weekend duty, he boarded bus service 88 at 1100 hours and was looking forward to meeting his family members. Feeling relaxed after performing his military duty, there was no sign that his Advanced Close Combat skills would soon be called into action.

During the journey, an outlandishly dressed man entered the bus, behaving suspiciously as he repeatedly changed seats, finally choosing a seat next to a young female passenger. Suddenly, the girl jumped out of her seat and made her way to her father, Mr Tan, who was several seats away. She told him that she had been flashed at by the man. When Mr Tan confronted the flasher and mentioned that the police would be informed, he made a dash for the exit. Instinctively, 1SG Yu sprang into action.

"I chased the man down the stairs from the upper deck together with Mr Tan and with the help of another passenger, we

managed to grab him just before he exited the bus. I then pinned him against the side of the bus with the "Back Lock" move learnt from my Advanced Close Combat Training (ACCT), rendering him immobile" recounted 1SG Yu, who is also an auxiliary ACCT instructor. After several futile attempts to struggle free, the man gave up and 1SG Yu allowed him to sit down.

Despite the many compliments received from the girl's family, 1SG Yu still remains modest about his brave contribution. "I don't feel that special. Anyone should do it, it's part of our civic duty and I would have stepped forward whether in uniform or not. I am however very glad that my military training enabled me to perform the task with confidence." He also attributed his readiness to the Army's excellent training and the wise words of his former chief instructor. He explained, "My instructor once told me that when we learn these skills, we should learn it properly because we never know when they will be called into action. That mindset and training certainly paid off this time and I am truly glad for it."

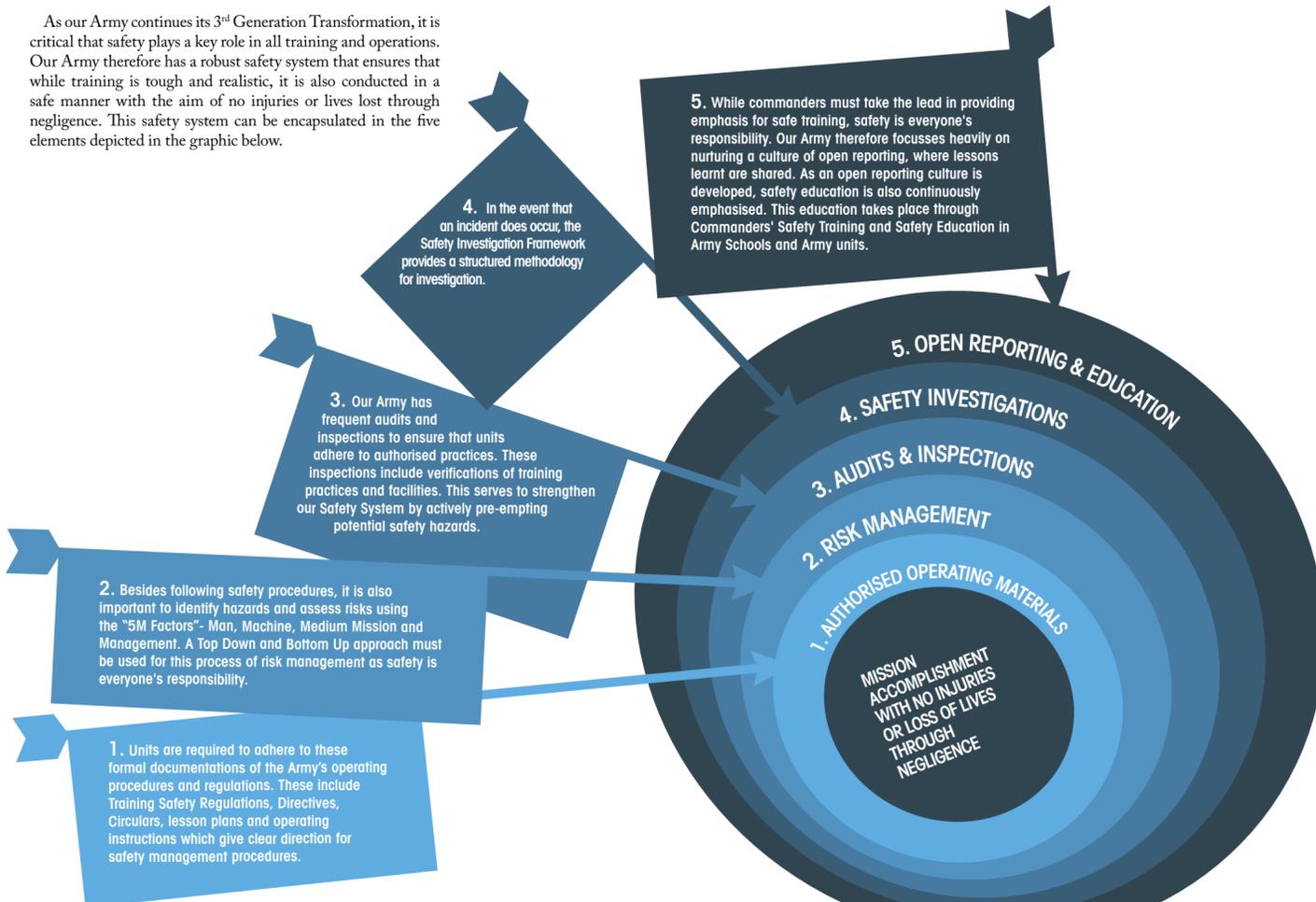


1SG Yu's Army training enabled him to perform the "Back Lock" swiftly and effectively.

Our Army's Safety System Explained

Text by Chia Han Sheng / Graphics by Jonathan Ong

As our Army continues its 3rd Generation Transformation, it is critical that safety plays a key role in all training and operations. Our Army therefore has a robust safety system that ensures that while training is tough and realistic, it is also conducted in a safe manner with the aim of no injuries or lives lost through negligence. This safety system can be encapsulated in the five elements depicted in the graphic below.



Customs and Traditions

Evolution of Weapons

Story by Tham Wei Yang / Photography from Army News Archive



The discovery of gunpowder formed the foundation of modern weaponry, leading to substantial developments in areas such as artillery.

Few aspects of the military draw as much curiosity and wonder as weaponry. Parents would have observed their sons' fascination with guns and swords, and quite possibly partaken in it. Military buffs devote countless hours to studying and collecting weapons from all over the world, and the history of weapons is itself closely studied by military historians. The history of this endeavour to enhance the fighting ability of man is a story of chance, innovation and determination. In this article, we outline how weapons have evolved ever since the first of their kind was fashioned.

Pre-modern Weapons

It is speculated that the club was the first weapon that man fashioned for himself, a simple device that increased the reach and strength of a person. The sling, the spear, and the stone axe followed closely. The sling fired projectiles

over a longer range than if thrown by hand, the spear gave greater reach, and the stone axe was vastly more lethal than the club. Whoever came into possession of these weapons first had an advantage over his enemies, but only temporarily. Survivors would learn to ways to counteract new technology, or copy and improve on it.

This led to a prehistoric arms race of sorts, with basic weapons being repeatedly refined and modified so that they could better serve their purpose. Thus humans learned to chip flint so that stones could be made into sharper axe heads, spears specially designed for throwing were developed, and the bow was invented to give greater range with less physical exertion. These advances were also partly motivated by the desire to improve hunting yields and lessen the tediousness of mundane tasks such as chopping wood.

Over time, human ingenuity continued to astound. Around 3,000 B.C. man discovered copper and its uses. Through another fortuitous discovery, man learn how to produce bronze by adding tin to copper, resulting in harder and sharper weapons. But the development of pre-modern weapons was slow and restricted to improvements on the basic prehistoric arms. Catapults, battering rams, ballistas and the like, though they were impressive feats of engineering, were essentially slings, clubs and crossbows – only bigger and more powerful. The emergence of gunpowder at the beginning of the 14th century would truly propel weapon development to unprecedented heights.

Gunpowder and its Developments

Inventions are often the fruit of fortuitous accidents and serendipity rather than deliberate action, yet few can claim to have been as starkly ironic and in conflict with their original purposes. After all, the men who came by gunpowder were Chinese alchemists conducting research on the secrets of eternal life!

Gunpowder did have some non-lethal uses. For some time it was used to treat skin diseases and as a fumigant, but its comparative advantage was eventually found to be in warfare. Early firearms were relatively crude; the earliest device resembling a gun was a gunpowder-filled paper-bamboo tube with shrapnel as ammunition. The technology gradually improved to maximise the explosive power of gunpowder. More explosive versions of gunpowder itself were made, which in turn required harder barrels made of metal. Projectiles were also designed to fit the size and shape of the barrels more closely and exploit the propellant effect.

Gunpowder spawned a number of developments to which modern weaponry owes much. The cannon, for instance, was the precursor to howitzers and mortars. Rocket technology, too, began when the Chinese experimented with ways to harness gunpowder's propelling power. Firearms repeatedly forced drastic changes on tactics and strategies of that era – for example, ending the dominance of cavalry – as they improved over time. The appearance of the highly efficient machine gun during the First World War, marking the arrival of rapid-fire technology, has been hailed as a major milestone in weapon evolution. All these have a major impact on the evolution of warfare.

Corrigendum

The box story on the new Army logo on the back page of Issue 159 contains an error. The correct text should read "Ready Relevant Decisive" and not "Ready Reflect Decisive".

We apologise for the error.

Passing On The Baton

APPOINTMENT	INCOMING	OUTGOING
COMDT HQ NCC	LTC KOH YONG CHUA ADRIAN	LTC KHOO THIAM HUAT
CO AFC	LTC KOH YONG JIN	LTC SHANG KOK KEONG
CO ACTC 2 ITI	LTC HENG POH SENG	LTC KOH YONG JIN
CO 3 AMB & CO 33 FCSSB	LTC TAN KOON WOO	LTC KEITH JUDE HO CHI-MIN
CO BMTC SCH 1	LTC LUAM HON YUEN	LTC LOONG TEAN YUAN
CO 1 SIR	MAJ LIEN CHOONG LUEN	MAJ ONG AI CHUAN

Quiz Of The Month - NOV / DEC

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

Q: Which device implemented at Wallaby 08 records the speed of vehicles in Shoalwater Bay Training Area?
Closing Date : 13 February 2009

Answer: Rank / Name:
Unit: E-mail:
NRIC: Contact No.:

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

OCT / NOV Quiz

OCT / NOV Quiz	OCT / NOV Winners
Q: Which building in the MUTF allows observers to watch high fidelity video streaming of the battlefield? A: The Mural Exercise Control Centre (MEXCON)	1) 3SG TIAN BOON SIANG NRIC: 5000x399J 2) 2WO LIM KONG ANNTONY NRIC: 5000x857F 3) 3SG EDWIN NEO NRIC: 5000x434C 4) 3SG PONG SELUNGYAN NRIC: 5000x079E 5) LTA (NS) RITCHIEWEE NRIC: 5000x145B

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Army News thanks CPL Lim Wei Zhong (below left) and CPL Hui Nai Xiang for their contributions to Army News. We wish them all the best for their future endeavours!



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Fighting as One

Leopard Platoon Live-Firing

Story by Lim Wei Zhong / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong & Wan Zhong Wei

If picking up a new skill in six months is tough, then learning to perform that skill in tandem with a whole platoon is even harder, as attested by the servicemen of the 1st Company, 48th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment (48 SAR). On 11 November, they executed their first platoon live-firing exercise at Australia's Shoalwater Bay Training Area. The vast area four times the size of Singapore gave our tanks the opportunity to execute precision manoeuvres and test its long range firepower.

For each mission, a platoon of four Leopard tanks coordinated manoeuvres across undulating terrain, hunting for targets. Once these targets were acquired, orchestrated fires were unleashed to destroy them. The mission challenges included firing accurately on the move, and operating at night with low visibility.

Working As A Team

For every manoeuvre, the four-man tank crew had to possess perfect teamwork to maximise the Leopard's firepower and mobility. Army News speaks to different crew members from 1st Company, 48 SAR about their first platoon live-firing experience.

Tank Commander and Platoon 2IC
2LT Vinoth Pannirsilvam



"The vast land area here allows us to practise all the formations we couldn't do in Singapore – Line Up, Arrowhead, Wedge... We've also found the Leopard to be very mobile – my tank has climbed a 1.5-metre high ditch, which is almost vertical. It can do it because of the high horsepower engine.

During the exercise, we had an objective that was six kilometres away and were told to bash through the forest to surprise the enemy. This gave us a chance to execute and experience a flanking manoeuvre, which is what we would actually do in war. All these add to the realism of our training.

Here we can operate as a platoon, allow the men to feel what it is like working together with other tanks firing at the same time. For example, when four tanks are moving, those behind should not point their guns at the tank in front. They should instead cover the flank of the formation.



Our Leopard crew keeping the tank in tip-top condition



The platoon live firing gave our Leopard crewmen the taste of operating under the cover of night

This exercise has truly enabled us to learn so much about the Leopard. More importantly, because of the realism, we were able to discover and remedy our gaps, something which is not possible to do so in Singapore. We have leveled up a lot here and pushed the tank to its limits. It makes us a lot more effective and lethal."

Driver
PTE Toh Jun Long

"My greatest takeaway from this exercise is the friendship and bonding among the crew, as we went through a lot of hardship together. The friendship has really helped us to operate this new platform faster and more efficiently. I definitely feel more confident, especially about driving at night or at high speed, and bashing through rough terrain."

Gun Loader
PTE Tarun Jayaram

"The platoon live-firing was the biggest exercise we did so far. It was an exciting and satisfying opportunity. Now, we truly realise and appreciate how powerful the Leopard is."

Gunner
PTE Ang Shao Kai

"Here, we get to fire the main gun on the move, and at longer ranges. We get more practise in handling the gun and stabilising our sight on the target. It is a great feeling to see all the hard preparations paid off."

He said, "There has been a lot of opportunities to conduct repairs which have helped us to get a feel of the new Leopard Tank. The dusty environment out here is a very challenging one and because of the high heat encountered, some of the electrical components failed. We had many in depth practical lessons from servicing the tanks out in the field."



Master Technician Trainer, SSG Cheong Teck Min added that one challenge they faced was adapting to the more sophisticated systems of the Leopard 2A4 Main Battle Tank. He said, "This is the first weapon we have that is equipped with a fully stabilising system, and a true hunter-killer capability. It's also a challenge to adapt the tank to our climate, due to the higher heat and moisture that we have locally."

Keeping Our Leopards Fit and Ready

Behind the success of our Leopard Tanks is a dedicated team of Combat Service Support (CSS) personnel who maintain these complex machines and rectify any problems on-site in Australia. Just like our Leopard crewmen, it was a learning journey for the 48 Forward Maintenance Platoon. The personnel had to learn from scratch, having only serviced SM-1 tanks in the past.

Workshop 2IC, 1WO Seet Shu Thye, felt that the exercise was an invaluable educational learning experience for his techni-

Making the Next Leap

As the Leopard crewmen have already been trained in their individual roles, their main focus for this live-firing was to hone their capabilities at the platoon level. Commanding Officer 48 SAR, LTC Ng Chia Yong, said, "We're here to do a tactical live-firing exercise, which has been a real test of the crew's ability to perform in combat operations. After this stage, we are ready to operate with the tanks at the platoon level. Next, we'll begin training at the company level, which will culminate with a live-firing overseas in 2009."