

Celebrating Singapore, Our Home at Singapore Day 2013

Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean and Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Grace Fu joined 6,200 Singaporeans living, working and studying in Australia at The Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney for Singapore Day 2013 to "Celebrate Singapore, Our Home"¹ today.

"We want to make sure that we continue to reach out to all Singaporeans including our Singaporeans who are overseas - working, studying and living. Singapore Day is important because it helps all of us to remain connected with families, with friends and with Singapore," DPM Teo said in his opening address at the event.

Singapore Day provides an opportunity for Singaporeans abroad to network and update themselves on Singapore.

Participants enjoyed familiar tastes, sights and sounds of home including authentic hawker food such as char kway teow, laksa, satay and chilli crab. They also updated themselves on developments in the education landscape, the vibrant sports scene, the latest public housing initiatives and career opportunities back home.

'Singapore Boy' Hossan Leong, The Noose's Chua En-lai and Alaric Tay, Phua Chu Kang Pte Ltd's Gurmit Singh and Irene Ang, funny man Mark Lee, singercomposer Dick Lee, Olivia Ong, Melbourne-based music maestro Charlie Lim and local indie band Cashew Chemists provided entertainment with their distinctive local flavour.

Singapore Day is a collaborative effort by OSU and its partners from the public, people and private sectors. It is held annually in major cities where there are a significant number of Singaporeans. Singapore Days have been held in New York (2007), Melbourne (2008), London (2009), Shanghai (2011) and New York (2012).

More details on Singapore Day 2013 can be found on www.SingaporeDay.sg and [www.fb.com/SingaporeDay](https://www.facebook.com/SingaporeDay).

Quotes from Singapore Day participants:

Overseas Singaporeans

"Singapore Day was great – a taste of home! It really feels like Singapore here in the middle of the Royal Botanic Gardens." – Serinder Athwal

"It is enjoyable to come together with Singaporeans to reminisce out time back home. I wish there are more events like this!" – Michelle Ng

"It was a good opportunity to meet friends who came to Sydney from other states just for this event." – Yao XinYuan

Concert artiste

"The connections that our overseas Singaporeans make with each other when they meet are really heart-warming to see. New friendships are made, old bonds renewed. It's about reconnecting with the Singaporeans whom we know as family and friends, and whom we know will remain intrinsically Singaporean." – Local artiste Hossan Leong, who is a fourth-time participant at Singapore Day.

Hawkers

"I am very happy to be a part of Singapore Day 2013. It all started when my father was first invited to participate in the event two years ago. He was really excited about meeting and interacting with Singaporeans overseas. His dedication to Singapore Day was inspiring. It meant a lot for him to be able to bring our Nasi Lemak and a taste of home to our fellow Singaporeans overseas, putting smiles on their faces as they satisfy their cravings for local hawker food. My father is no longer with us but I am here today to be in his place. Like him, I am glad to have been given the opportunity to be a part of this." - Abdul Malik Hassan, owner of Selera Rasa Nasi Lemak, a third-time participant at Singapore Day

<Photo of DPM with Mr Malik can be found in Annex E (powerpoint slides)>

"I really enjoyed chatting with the Singaporeans here, who told me about how much they missed local food!" -- Abdus Salam S/O Akber Ali (Abdhus Salam Indian Rojak), a third-time participant at Singapore Day

"I liked seeing fellow Singaporeans in Australia tuck into Singaporean food, especially when they asked for more. Knowing that they enjoyed the food that I had prepared is all I needed from this trip!" -- Shirley Tay (Chey Sua Carrot Cake), a third-time participant at Singapore Day

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Annexes

- a) Annex A: Fact Sheet on Overseas Singaporean Unit & its Programmes
- b) Annex B: DPM Teo Chee Hean's welcome remarks at Singapore Day 2013
- c) Annex C: Transcript of DPM Teo Chee Hean's Doorstop Interview
- d) Annex D: Transcript of Minister Grace Fu's Doorstop Interview
- e) Annex E: Photos of Singapore Day 2013 (powerpoint slides)

ANNEX A

FACT SHEET

Overseas Singaporean Unit

Overview

The Overseas Singaporean Unit (OSU) was set up in January 2006 to engage overseas Singaporeans so as to keep them emotionally connected to Singapore. The OSU works with many partners to organise and support a suite of programmes that have a wide outreach to overseas Singaporeans.

Programmes Held Overseas

The Singapore Speaker Series

The Singapore Speaker Series provides overseas Singaporeans a first-hand account of developments and opportunities as well as key trends affecting Singapore and Singaporeans. Speakers include prominent Singaporean business or public sector leaders. These up-close and personal interaction sessions, provide Singaporeans abroad deeper insight into current key issues and how they are being addressed.

Speakers have included Liew Mun Leong (Chairman, Changi Airport Group), Lucien Wong (Chairman and Senior Partner, Allen and Gledhill) and Philip Yeo (Chairman, SPRING Singapore and Economic Development Innovations Singapore).

Singapore Buzz

The Singapore (SG) Buzz is a talk series that provides a firsthand flavour of how fellow Singaporeans are redefining the possibilities and carving out their own paths to success. Speakers of SG Buzz are luminaries from non-traditional or emerging fields such as the creative, entertainment, sports, technology, and entrepreneurship scene. Their sharing focuses on the diversity in opportunities and pathways for careers in Singapore.

Speakers have included Hossan Leong (actor), Ang Peng Siong (swimming coach and ex-Olympic athlete), Leslie Tay (family doctor and popular food blogger) and Daniel Boey (fashion director).

Programmes Held in Singapore

Camp@Home

Camp@Home is a three-day non-residential programme for overseas Singaporean children aged 7 to 12 years old who are back in Singapore during their summer break. It aims to pique the campers' interest in Singapore's culture, heritage and school environment through interactive and experiential activities. Through Camp@Home, overseas Singaporean children are encouraged to stay connected to Singapore and to strengthen their rootedness to home. [See attachment for the detailed programme for this run of Camp@Home.]

Rediscover!Home

Rediscover!Home, a pilot programme by OSU, is a two-day non-residential programme to engage overseas Singaporean youth aged 13 to 18 years old. It aims to give them an appreciation of Singapore's nation building journey and heritage so as to evoke a sense of pride and understanding of what it means to be a Singaporean.

Pre-departure events and Student Leaders Engagement Sessions

OSU reaches out to overseas-bound students during pre-departure events held in Singapore. These are opportunities for OSU to introduce the platforms and programmes available to keep our overseas-bound students connected to happenings back home.

During the summer break, OSU creates platforms for student leaders from different universities to meet in Singapore and spin-off collaboration amongst themselves.

Online Programmes

Overseas Singaporean Portal

The Overseas Singaporean Portal is a one-stop online platform that contains updates from home, links to relevant government policies, as well as tips and advice from overseas Singaporeans who have shared their stories of life abroad.

The Overseas Singaporean Portal is at www.overseassingaporean.sg

OSU Facebook

The OSU Facebook page is an online space for overseas Singaporeans to come together and connect with home and each other. Featuring bite-sized updates on things that are trending or happenings in Singapore, overseas Singaporeans can share and connect with each other over all things distinctively Singapore, be it food, Singlish, quirks or simple things that they miss.

OSU Facebook is at <http://www.facebook.com/OverseasSingaporean>.

ANNEX B

<Checked against delivery>

WELCOME REMARKS BY MR TEO CHEE HEAN, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER IN-CHARGE OF NATIONAL POPULATION AND TALENT DIVISION AT SINGAPORE DAY 2013, 12 OCTOBER 2013, THE DOMAIN, ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Good afternoon, everyone. It is a great pleasure to see so many of you here this afternoon, gathered together in Sydney to celebrate all things that are Singapore.

First of all, I would like to recognize my colleague Ms Grace Fu who is also here with us, and also High Commissioner Mike Teo, and also an old colleague of mine from the SAF.

I have been having a good visit here in Australia. One purpose of my visit was to touch base with the new Australian government and over the last two days, I have had the opportunity to meet the six members of the Cabinet including Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss.

I also had a very good site visit yesterday to our ship RSS Endeavour which has been in Australia in Sydney for the last one week taking part in the international fleet review. She left port at 6pm yesterday, headed for home, eagerly waiting to get home in 12 days' time.

This is our sixth Singapore Day. The first we held in New York City in 2007 and the second in Melbourne in 2008. We've had Singapore Day in several other cities, including Shanghai and London. This year, we are back in Australia, in Sydney.

Singapore Day is important because it helps all of us to remain connected with families, with friends and with Singapore. This year has been an interesting and important year.

A New Way Forward

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong made an important speech at the National Day Rally this year. He

spoke basically about three things which Singaporeans are very concerned about, which are housing, healthcare and education.

On the housing front, he announced several initiatives which would give high assurance to Singaporeans that they will be able to afford housing in Singapore.

On the healthcare front, he made a number of announcements which included extending Medishield to all Singaporeans regardless of age including those with pre-existing medical conditions.

In education, he also made some announcements to make the education system more flexible, more accessible, and also easier for Singaporeans to continue to upgrade themselves throughout their lives in a variety of new institutions in Singapore.

Building a Strong Singaporean Community

What is important for this occasion is that we want to make sure that we continue to reach out to all Singaporeans including our Singaporeans who are overseas - working, studying and living.

There are two new mobile services which you can make use of to stay in touch. One is Toggle SG+ and this provides news and access to your favourite shows on-the-go.

The second is iContactSG (pronounced as "I-Contact-S-G") and this helps to provide industry updates and also, updates on job opportunities and other happenings in Singapore.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for being here to join in today and also to our many partners from the people, private and public sectors. I would also like to give a big thank you to all our friends who have been working very hard to provide us with what brings us all together, and that's food.

There are three parts of our Singapore Day. The first is food, the second is fun and entertainment with our friends Hossan (Leong) and others, and third, is the booths out here, which help to update ourselves on what is happening in Singapore - to help you to remain connected to Singapore and reintegrate when you go come home.

Once again, thank you very much for your presence here. We want to keep in touch with you, and let's all stay connected with family, friends and with Singapore.

Enjoy yourselves! Thank you very much.

TRANSCRIPT OF DPM TEO'S DOORSTOP INTERVIEW

TRANSCRIPT OF DPM'S DOORSTOP AT SINGAPORE DAY 2013 IN SYDNEY 12 OCTOBER 2013

What is the significance of organising Singapore Day?

I'm very glad that we are organising Singapore Day in Sydney. We have a very large group of overseas Singaporeans in Australia and in particular, in Sydney. We held our first Singapore Day six years ago and all the Singapore Days we've held since then have been very welcomed by our overseas Singaporeans. It helps to reach out and helps all of us to stay connected to family, friends and home.

What did you gather from the people you have spoken to?

There were a few things. Many are still attached to Singapore. A good number of them came dressed in red and white. It is very good to see. They all enjoyed the food. I think they also enjoyed the opportunity to connect with one another. They found the exhibits useful, to update them on what's happening in Singapore.

With more Singaporeans moving overseas, how important is it to keep them connected to Singapore?

This is part of the globalised world. There are more Singaporeans who work and study overseas and also because more Singaporean companies are overseas. It's good to have Singaporeans who have overseas experiences. But we hope that all Singaporeans overseas will stay connected and still feel a part of Singapore. So Singapore Day helps us to reach out to Singaporeans overseas.

There are other ways of doing so. Technology helps. For example we now have Toggle SG+ and that provides updates, news and even your favourite TV programmes. iContactSG brings you up-to-date news on job opportunities and the latest happenings in Singapore.

Even though there are more Singaporeans overseas, there are more ways they can stay connected.

Is the Government going to do more to reach out to these Singaporeans?

It is a two-way street. When Singaporeans go overseas, they also want to keep in contact with what's happening in Singapore. The number of Singaporeans here in Australia and in the Sydney region who have come forward to take part in Singapore Day very enthusiastically is an indication that they too want to keep in touch with Singaporeans. We're very happy to see that Singapore Day is welcomed by our Singaporeans here. And also by the families of our overseas Singaporeans back home, who are happy that we are reaching out to them. In fact, I met many Singaporeans who tell me where they live in Singapore, or that their parents had met me in Singapore before.

Any new initiatives in the pipeline to keep them connected to Singapore?

As I said we have many opportunities such as the Toggle SG+, which provides news and favourite TV programmes. There is also a mobile app, iContactSG, which provides avenues for job opportunities and latest developments in Singapore.

Comments about the Singapore Day 2013 turnout?

I think it is a very good turnout. What's important also, is that we've had a lot of participation from the Singaporeans here in Australia. We have 180 volunteers who helped to put the occasion together. You can see them all around helping out at the site. There are also more opportunities for Singaporeans here to take part. There are opportunities for them to write down their New Year wishes on these floating balls, which will then be put on Marina Bay on New Year's Day. They can donate to the Community Chest online. They can send their good wishes to Team Singapore. There's also the Singer-porean contest, which I think is very good. So there's more participation.

As more Singaporeans move overseas, are you worried that the Singapore identity will be diluted?

So, on the one hand, while globalisation brings more Singaporeans overseas, globalisation and technology itself helps us to keep connected. The important thing is what you have in your heart. And I think certainly from Singaporeans in Singapore, we want to reach out to Singaporeans overseas because many of them are our family and friends. And it's good that Singaporeans overseas themselves also want to remain in contact.

Do you have a message to Singaporeans in Australia?

I want to wish all our overseas Singaporeans in Australia all the very best in their studies and their work. And to stay connected with families, with friends and with home. I wish you all good health and happiness.

ANNEX D

TRANSCRIPT OF MINISTER GRACE FU'S DOORSTOP INTERVIEW

Minister, you had a dialogue with Singaporeans overseas earlier. What issues do you think Singaporeans overseas face and need to be attended to?

Annex E

PHOTOS OF SINGAPORE DAY

(pls refer to [powerpoint slides](#))

¹Please refer to Annexes B, C and D for DPM Teo Chee Hean's and Minister Grace Fu's comments at Singapore Day.