

Media Release

To News Editors

122 VOLUNTEERS, INTEREST GROUPS AND CORPORATIONS HONOURED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO NSMEN COMMUNITY

1. A total of 133 awards were presented to 109 volunteers, two interest groups and 11 corporate partners, at the 15th SAFRA Awards held at SAFRA Mount Faber this year, with some receiving awards from more than one category.
2. The SAFRA Awards recognises recipients for their significant contributions towards SAFRA, the National Service Resort & Country Club and So Drama! Entertainment¹, to the benefit of the NSmen community.
3. The event was graced by Minister for Defence and Chairman of SAFRA Board of Governors Dr Ng Eng Hen, who presented the Friend of SAFRA Award and Meritorious Service Award to award recipients.
4. Chevron Singapore Pte Ltd (Caltex) and Shaw Theatres received the Friend of SAFRA Award for their long-standing support in efforts to recognise the contributions of NSmen since 2009 and 2013 respectively. Chevron Singapore Pte Ltd (Caltex) has been offering daily fuel discounts to SAFRA members, as well as enhanced discounts in celebration of Singapore Armed Forces Day and National Day. Shaw Theatres has been providing daily movie discounts for SAFRA members, and supporting special promotions and SAFRA events to thank national servicemen for their contributions to Singapore's defence.
5. Eight volunteers received the Meritorious Service Award this year in honour of their outstanding contributions. One of the recipients of both the Meritorious Service Gold Award and 15-year Long Service Award was LTC(NS) Andy Tan Heok, who spearheads the development of SAFRA's seventh clubhouse slated to be built in Choa Chu Kang by 2022. He also serves as a Member of the SAFRA Management Committee, Chairman of the SAFRA Corporate Branding Committee, and Member of the SMART SAFRA

¹ Previously SAFRA Radio, So Drama! Entertainment (SDE) is a Singapore media company that brings quality content and entertainment out of their passion for the nation. SDE's portfolio includes four established brands – 88.3JIA, Music & Drama Company, PIONEER and POWER 98.

Committee, contributing to efforts in strengthening SAFRA's communications and digital transformation to enhance engagement with NSmen and their families. He was also a recipient of this year's National Day Awards, the Public Service Star Bintang Bakti Masyarakat (BBM).

6. During the awards ceremony, Dr Ng said that SAFRA's network of clubs is expected to draw 10 million visitors annually once SAFRA Choa Chu Kang is completed in 2022. He said, "Our SAFRA clubs today cater to more than 430,000 members and their families all across the island... A seventh clubhouse will be built at Choa Chu Kang... The offerings of our SAFRA clubs that we build remain true to its original and unchanged mission – which is to offer top notch facilities as a nod of appreciation to the mass of NSmen and their families for their service in defending Singapore... When SAFRA Choa Chu Kang is completed, we expect 10 million visitors to SAFRA each year. Quite an achievement!"

7. Dr Ng also highlighted that SAFRA is a useful platform for NSmen to deepen bonds with each other. He said, "Another key function of SAFRA is to provide touchpoints for our NSmen to bond with one another, so that they can build units that are more cohesive, with a stronger camaraderie to be more effective as a fighting force."

8. One of the recipients of both the Meritorious Service Bronze Award and 5-year Long Service Award was CPL(NS) Soh Yi Da, who had initiated and contributed in organising many new activities in his capacity as both Member of the SAFRA Toa Payoh Executive Committee and Vice-Chairman of the SAFRA Youth Network Committee to engage young NSmen. This includes events such as the SAFRA NERF Challenge in 2016, SAFRA eSports Carnival in 2017, and the SAFRA Mobile Gaming Tournament in 2019.

9. Senior Minister of State for Defence and President of SAFRA Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman also presented the Commendation Award to 12 volunteers and nine corporations and two interest groups, as well as the Outstanding New Volunteer Award to five volunteers.

10. One of the recipients of both the Commendation and Outstanding New Volunteer Award was 25-year-old CPL(NS) Jovan Tan, who served as a Member of the SAFRA Entrepreneurs' Club Committee since 2016, contributing extensively to the organisation of various events and seminars to provide opportunities for NSmen to network and gain valuable insights from industry experts and business professionals. He is also the youngest recipient of this year's SAFRA Awards.

11. Corporations who received the Commendation Award include DBS Bank Ltd, Families for Life Council, Kinderland Educare Services Ptd Ltd, Singapore Technologies

Engineering Ltd, Sportsmatch Marketing Ptd Ltd, Emjay Enterprise Ptd Ltd, Lazada Singapore Pte Ltd, Volkswagon Group Singapore and Wildlife Reserves Singapore.

12. A total of 95 volunteers received their Long Service Awards this year, for terms of service ranging from 5 years to 45 years.

SAFRA Strategic Review

13. Dr Ng Eng Hen also announced that SAFRA is conducting a strategic review to ensure that it continues to be effective in its mission to offer top notch facilities to appreciate NSmen and their families for their service to defend Singapore. He said, "This review will encompass developing new strategic partners, using digital technology to enhance user experience of SAFRA members and strengthening social cohesion and psychological resilience among NSmen."

14. The SAFRA Strategic Review is led by a steering committee chaired by Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman and supported by many NSmen volunteers. The views of NSmen and members of the public will be sought via focus group sessions and surveys, and the review is expected to be completed by mid-2020.

Kindly refer to **Annex A** for the full list of award recipients for the 15th SAFRA Awards and **Annex B** for the speech by Minister for Defence and Chairman, SAFRA Board of Governors, Dr Ng Eng Hen.

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About SAFRA National Service Association

SAFRA was formed in 1972 to provide for the social and recreational needs of NSmen and their families through quality sports, social, educational and cultural programmes to recognise NSmen for their contributions to National Defence. SAFRA currently has a network of six clubs conveniently located in Jurong, Mount Faber, Punggol, Tampines, Toa Payoh and Yishun. Complementing the modern facilities at SAFRA clubs are a host of quality membership benefits and activities specially packaged for over 430,000 members and their families.

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RECIPIENTS OF 15TH SAFRA AWARDS

Friend of SAFRA Award

1. Chevron Singapore Pte Ltd (Caltex)
2. Shaw Theatres

Meritorious Service Gold Award

1. Mr Lim Swee Chye, Simon
2. LTC (NS) Tan Heok, Andy, BBM*

Meritorious Service Silver Award

1. SLTC (NS) Low Kian Ngian, Ace**
2. LTC (NS) Quek Chun Hou, Terence, PBM**
3. COL (NS) Ridzuan Bin Ismail

Meritorious Service Bronze Award

1. COL (NS) Lam Toa-Yee, Eugene*
2. CPL (NS) Soh Yi Da***
3. LTC (NS) Tan Lee Thong, Kelvin

** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (15 Years)*

*** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (10 Years)*

**** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (5 Years)*

Commendation Award (Individual)

1. Mr Chan Hoe Kit*
2. LTC (NS) Choe Zheng Guang, Evan
3. 2WO (RET) Chua Boon Heong
4. Mr Lee Chow Huei, Christopher
5. COL (NS) Lim Jew Pean
6. LTC (NS) Lim Meng Chong, Eddie**
7. Mr Ong Choon Seng
8. MAJ (NS) Ong Wei Shiong
9. CPT (NS) Dr Tan Hun Yau, Frankie**
10. CPL(NS) Tan Jovan***
11. Mr Tay Kian Hwee, David****
12. LTA (NS) Zhao Dexin**

** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (20 Years)*

*** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (5 Years)*

**** Also a recipient of Outstanding New Volunteer Award*

***** Also a recipient of Long Service Award (10 Years)*

Commendation Award (With Special Mention)

1. DBS Bank Ltd
2. Families for Life Council
3. Kinderland Educare Services Pte Ltd
4. ST Engineering Ltd
5. Sportsmatch Marketing Pte Ltd

Commendation Award (Corporation)

1. Emjay Enterprises Pte Ltd
2. Lazada Singapore Pte Ltd
3. Volkswagen Group Singapore
4. Wildlife Reserves Singapore

Commendation Award (Interest Group / Sports Team)

1. SAFRA Community Services Club (SAFRACS)
2. SAFRA Squash Club

Outstanding New Volunteer Award

1. LTC (NS) Cheong Yuen Hsing, Ronald
2. Mr Chuang Feng Er, Eric
3. Mr Peh Hock Soon, Hudson
4. CPL (NS) Tan Jovan*
5. Mr Yeo Hui Sheng, Donald

** Also a recipient of Commendation Award (Individual)*

Long Service Award (45 Years)

1. Mr Foo Tee Jun

Long Service Award (30 Years)

1. Mr Chan Mun Yew
2. Mr Chua Seng Chye, Raymond

Long Service Award (25 Years)

1. Mr Lim Chek Kwang, Eddie
2. Dr Looi Hong Cheong
3. Mr Quek Mong Huat, Eric
4. Mr Teo Keng Siang

Long Service Award (20 Years)

1. Mr Chee Kwet Chian, Andy
2. Mr Chan Hoe Kit*
3. Mr Koh Tuck Loong, Max
4. BG (RET) Lim Kim Lye
5. Mr Luey Kwong Yuen, Bernard
6. Mr Pang Tong Kuan, Andy
7. Mr Tan Wee Liang, William
8. Mr Teo Puay Chuan, Desmond

** Also a recipient of Commendation Award (Individual)*

Long Service Award (15 Years)

1. 2SG (NS) Chin Kok Kai
2. COL (RET) Chua Eng Wah, William, PBM
3. Mr Jispal Singh
4. COL (NS) Lam Toa-Yee, Eugene*
5. Mr Law Wei Kwang, Eric
6. Ms Lee Hu Gek, Cynthia
7. ME3 Lew Yeow Koon, Joseph
8. Mr Lim Teck San, Winston
9. Mr Ong Wee Leong, Freddy
10. Mr Seah Shang Shiaw, Edmund
11. Mr Shum Kwok Khoon, David
12. Mr Sim Yew Soon, Michael
13. Dr Soo Kwok Seng, Thomas
14. COL (NS) Srinivasan V.N.
15. LTC (RET) Swee Boon Chai
16. CPT (NS) Tan Chek Yong, Enrique
17. LTC (NS) Tan Heok, Andy, BBM**
18. MAJ (NS) Tang Gee Hian, Michael
19. Mr Tay Kuan Yang, Adrian
20. Ms Tay Seow Ling, Shirlyn
21. Dr Teo-Koh Sock Miang
22. LTC (NS) Wilson Silva
23. Mr Wong Teck Khim
24. Mr Yuen Ka Wei

** Also a recipient of Meritorious Service Award (Bronze)*

*** Also a recipient of Meritorious Service Award (Gold)*

Long Service Award (10 Years)

1. Mr Cheok Kai Weei
2. LTC (NS) Chiang Siew Kay
3. Ms Chong Chin Wah, Jenny
4. Mr Chow Tack Sing, Jimmy
5. Mr Chua Yam Seng
6. Mr How Choon Kiat
7. Mr Law Hah Hock, Dave
8. Mr Looi Wan Hui
9. SLTC (NS) Low Kian Ngian, Ace*
10. LTC (NS) Quek Chun Hou, Terence, PBM*
11. CPT (NS) Tan Seng Kiat James
12. LTC (RET) Tan Swee Kee
13. Mr Tan Yong Chiang, Joe
14. Mr Tay Kian Hwee, David**
15. Mr Toh Eng Keong, Enders

** Also a recipient of Meritorious Service Award (Silver)*

*** Also a recipient of Commendation Award (Individual)*

Long Service Award (5 Years)

1. Mr Boey Lee Chea, James
2. Mr Chua Swee Kiat
3. LCP (NS) Chan Tong Poh
4. CPT (NS) Ion Danker
5. Mr Chan Wai Kin
6. LCP (NS) Goh Yi Long
7. Mr Chang Wai Choon
8. CPL (NS) Ho Hee Teck, Gerald
9. Mr Chee Toh Ming, Benjamin
10. Ms Ho Hui Ee, Ivy
11. Mr Cheong Hai Poh
12. 3SG (NS) Ho Zi Hao, Kenneth
13. Dr Chiam Tut Fu
14. SLTC (RET) James Suresh
15. Mr Chien Koh Wei
16. Mr Khoo Yong Chuan
17. Mr Chua Peng Hock, William
18. MSG (NS) Lee Hwee Yong, Trevor
19. Mr Chua Peng Loke, Vincent
20. Mr Lim Kim Seng
21. Mr Lim Teck Chye
22. CPL (NS) Png Kim Siang, James
23. CPT (NS) Lim Tze Wei
24. 1WO (NS) Surindranath S/O Kaseenathan
25. MAJ (NS) Lin Jialiang
26. LCP (NS) Lum Yew Kong
27. Mr Tan Chong Keat, Dennis
28. Mr Ng Kim Teck
29. Mr Tan Kwang Cheak
30. Mr Ng Meng Yeow
31. Ms Tan Lay Har
32. Mr Oh Koh Chuan
33. Mr Teo Eng Dih
34. Mr Ong Chin Woo
35. Mr Toh Loo Pheng
36. Mr Ow Tai Zhi
37. 3SG (NS) Yap Song Niah
38. CPL (NS) Soh Yi Da*
39. LTC (NS) Lim Meng Chong, Eddie**
40. CPT (NS) Dr Tan Hun Yau, Frankie**
41. LTA (NS) Zhao Dexin**

* Also a recipient of Meritorious Service Award (Bronze)

** Also a recipient of Commendation Award (Individual)



SPEECH

Visit <http://www.mindef.gov.sg> for more news and information about MINDEF and the SAF

SPEECH BY MINISTER FOR DEFENCE AND CHAIRMAN, SAFRA BOARD OF GOVERNORS, DR NG ENG HEN, AT THE 15TH SAFRA AWARDS, ON 26 SEP 2019, 1920HRS, AT SAFRA MOUNT FABER

My parliamentary colleague and President of SAFRA, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman,

NSmen and volunteers,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. First, welcome to our newly renovated SAFRA Mount Faber. You remember the old SAFRA and it has changed. I asked them how long they took when we were walking up and they said one year. For one year's work I think it was done very well. I did not manage to ask them how much it cost, but I should ask them later. If you remember the old SAFRA Mount Faber, the entrance was not so grand so I think the architects who built this did a good job. If you remember the old ballroom, it

was much colder I think. It must be because we are on top of Mount Faber. But SAFRA in general has come a long way since its inception in 1972, 47 years ago. For those of you who know your history, the first clubhouse was a refurbished building. I think we probably did not have funds so to kick-start it we got a building which former Norwegian seamen used. I do not think there was any particular affinity to the Nordic seamen, but it was a mission home that the Norwegian seamen used and it was at Prince Edward Lane. When SAFRA started, we had fewer than 2,000 members. Fast forward 47 years later, and I do not need to embellish it, our SAFRA clubs today cater to more than 430,000 members and their families all across the island and I think it is fair to say the facilities in each SAFRA is equivalent to what you get in private clubs at a much reduced price. A seventh clubhouse will be built at Choa Chu Kang. If you had time to walk through SAFRA downstairs, the full offerings are certainly very attractive. So the offerings of our SAFRA clubs that we build remain true to its original and unchanged mission – which is to offer top notch facilities as a nod of appreciation to the mass of NSmen and their families for their service in defending Singapore. Judging by the number of visitors each year – guess how many we have? 8.6 million at the last count. SAFRA has done exceedingly well and will do even better. When SAFRA Choa Chu Kang is completed, we expect 10 million visitors to SAFRA each year. Quite an achievement!

Appreciating NSmen

2. These significant achievements by SAFRA certainly would not have been possible without the contributions of you volunteers, who are here tonight, and that is why we wanted honour you. It is our way of saying thank you for your

commitment, dedication and expertise and for the many hours that you have put in to ensure that each SAFRA club is first designed well, then built well, on budget, and on time, and then on top of that, like Mount Faber, like Toa Payoh, like Tampines and the other SAFRA clubhouses that are refurbished and renovated so that they remain relevant and attractive to NSmen and their families all over Singapore. Because tastes change, interests change, and we have to keep up.

3. As a result of your input and assessments, the SAFRA management is respected and admired for its governance as well as its innovative programmes and facilities. So for those of you have visited SAFRA Punggol, the Splash @ Kidz Amaze is a winner. When we looked at the usage of traditional pools in our SAFRAs, I think the management of SAFRA Punggol decided to try something different. That was the reason for it but the main reason was also because we did not have space for an Olympic-sized pool. But it was a winning concept. For those of us who have noticed, in the previous SAFRAs, you can only pack so many people in an Olympic-sized pool. We do not manage our pools very well. I visited pools as Minister of Education in Finland. Just imagine – very cold, and when you build a 50-metre pool that is heated, you better make sure that you maximise it. How do they maximise it? Half the pool is never 50 metres. It is cut up in portions and you go on the lane that you swim based on your speed. It is not one person per lane. You do it like circuits so if you slow down, the other person chases you. That is how they utilise it. We are a little more generous, but you can only pack so many (people) in. But at SAFRA Punggol, you go in for two hours, your parents also go in, they throw parties and you can pack many, many multiples. It is the first indoor water playground in Singapore at 23,000 square feet, and named the Best in Category for playgrounds

in the Landscape Industry Association of Singapore Awards of Excellence in 2017. These are your ideas. Alongside unique activities such as the annual Sprint Kids Extreme obstacle challenge race – this was organised by SAFRA Jurong – SAFRA has provided many opportunities for our NSmen to build memorable experiences with their children. I think it has done very well to sustain this innovation, as seen by, again, SAFRA Punggol's attainment of the Building and Construction Authority Green Mark Platinum award. We want to continue to offer such high quality facilities at SAFRA clubs, whether they are fitness, recreation, enrichment, childcare services, professional learning and networking opportunities.

4. But SAFRA must do more than just provide country-club facilities to NSmen and their families, important and appreciated as those are. SAFRA's highest mission is to be part of the larger and critical national effort to build the right ethos for our SAF as well as our national spirit to defend our country. Many of the programmes therefore rightfully encourage businesses, schools and grassroots organisations to show appreciation to our NSmen, whether through art sessions conducted by pre-school centres – this we had in the lead-up to SAF Day this year, where they made heartfelt videos thanking our NSmen. They were screened in our clubs as well as at shopping malls and community clubs. SAFRA also collaborates with, at present, over 300 corporate partners, such as DBS Bank, Caltex Singapore and Shaw Theatres, and I want to thank you, businessmen, for providing discounts to NSmen and members as your way of saying thank you.

Strengthening Camaraderie

5. Another key function of SAFRA is to provide touchpoints for our NSmen to bond with one another, so that they can build units that are more cohesive, with a stronger camaraderie to be more effective as a fighting force.

6. Each year, over 40,000 NSmen participate in unit cohesion activities organised during their In-Camp Training. Recently, SAFRA expanded the offerings in interest groups. There is now SAFRA Entrepreneurs' Club, SAFRA Tech Club and SAFRA Digital Media Club. These are good initiatives that keep pace with new lifestyle trends and promote unit cohesion. If you as volunteers have other ideas, send in to me or to other SAFRA members on our emails and we promise to look into them, and apply or implement them if there is interest.

Important Role of Volunteers and Corporate Partners

7. Our volunteers, whom we all honour tonight, serve on various committees and interest groups as well as the National Service Resort and Country Club. I should add that we have many female volunteers too, and we greatly appreciate your time and expertise during our meetings.

8. Tonight we recognise 109 volunteers, two interest groups, and 11 corporate partners through the SAFRA Awards. I want to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate all of you this year. I also want to make special mention of LTC(NS)

Andy Tan Heok, who was nominated for the National Day Awards this year, and received The Public Service Star Bintang Bakti Masyarakat (BBM). He is currently serving as a member of the SAFRA Management Committee, and is spearheading the upcoming SAFRA club at Choa Chu Kang. I also want to commend CPL(NS) Soh Yi Da, who has initiated many new activities as a member of SAFRA's Toa Payoh Executive Committee and Vice-Chairman of SAFRA's Youth Network Committee. At SAFRA, no volunteer is too old or too young and we appreciate all comers. Our youngest award recipient this evening is 25-year-old CPL(NS) Jovan Tan, who leads the programmes in our Entrepreneurs' Club. Our two oldest volunteers on record are both 84 this year; Mr Foo Tee Jun – who received the 45-year Long Service Award this year, and MAJ(RET) Peter Soh – a member of the SAF Veterans' League Committee. I want to thank you all for your service.

SAFRA Strategic Review

9. SAFRA has done very well and fulfilled its mission and to ensure that it keeps doing so, SAFRA is conducting a strategic review. The review will encompass new strategic partners using digital technology to enhance user experience, strengthen social cohesion and psychological resilience among NSmen. Here, I would like to put on record my deep thanks to my colleague, Senior Minister of State for Defence (SMS) Maliki, who is leading this review and among his many activities, I must tell you that he is sometimes more in the air than he is on ground because he is involved in both Defence and Foreign Affairs. So you can imagine how much we load on him. But I think his *rendang* or *kambing* is very good so he gets all the energy he has, and his wife Sadiyah is a marvellous cook, I can attest to it. When he invites me over

during Hari Raya Puasa, I go to his house and I dispense with formalities. I just go straight to his kitchen. I sit there with my wife, talk to his mum and they just feed me. I mean that is a fair exchange. But SMS Maliki is leading this review and his Steering Committee comprises many NSmen volunteers and they will seek the views of the public through focus group discussions. These will be completed by mid-2020 and we look forward to your recommendations.

10. Apart from these awards, let me conclude by putting into context what we are doing. Week in and out, we meet in groups, we build our SAFRA clubs and we meet each other. But you know, we are in a fraction point in global affairs where the question is, “What is the price and what is the value of social capital?” You see societies breaking up – literally breaking up. We do not need to look at Hong Kong, it is beyond that. Europe – anti- migrant feelings, the alternate right, extreme right groups, coming in, even left groups coming in. It is pulling and almost tearing this social fabric apart. The question that is being asked is, “In all these societies across the world, what is the value of social capital and more importantly, when that value drops, what are the consequences?” Unfortunately, I think for our generation and our children’s generation, we will see the price of failure. So I encourage us, as we do our activities, not to underplay or underestimate what keeps us together. They are mundane activities but it is the understanding of this. I had the honour of hearing and watching Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong receive his World Statesman Award at this foundation, the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, and they are as old as Singapore. They started in 1965 and their raison d’être mission is to do what we have done as a society to build mutual acceptance, tolerance of different communities. So when PM Lee related that to what we have done, I

looked at the faces of the people attending. It was about 500 strong and some of the things that we are doing, people think that it might be crazy, that it might be a wonderful idea but how can it be done? It can only be done because Singaporeans are willing to do it.

Conclusion

11. So congratulations to all of you. Thank you to all our volunteers and corporate partners, both past and present, for all your contributions. I have full confidence that with your help, SAFRA will grow from strength to strength as a key pillar of our NS system, national defence and social compact. Thank you very much.

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