

ARMY NEWS

PULSE OF OUR ARMY



ARMY READY, SOLDIER STRONG
STRONG BODY, STRONG HEART, STRONG MIND

READY IN PEACE
ALWAYS READY, ALWAYS VIGILANT

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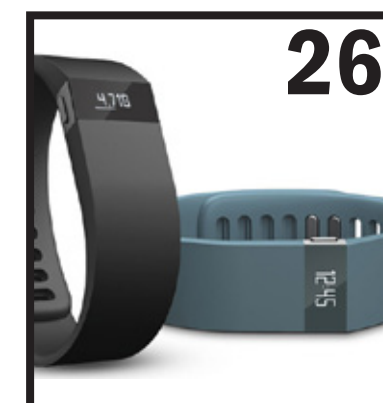
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Can you feel it yet? I am not implying the El Nino effect causing the hot and dry weather in Singapore. I am talking about being Soldier Strong.

In Our Singapore Army, to be Soldier Strong, you will need three different embodiments of "Strong" - Strong Body, Strong Heart and Strong Mind.

As we embark on a new work year, read on as Our Army continues to transform - to focusing on a Strong Body, Strong Heart and Strong Mind. Feel the adrenaline rush of synchronized paddling on the dragon boat; be inspired as we welcome our first female Formation Commander; and read about the young officer who overcame adversity to join the Officer Corps.

We are also very proud and honoured to be one of the recipients of the Artillery Shell fired during the State Funeral of our Founding Prime Minister, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

As always, keep your comments, contributions and feedback coming in and thank you for your continual support. We look forward to seeing you in the next issue.

I am ready for **Soldier Strong**, are you?

Signing off,
LTA Neo Choon Yeong

Army News would like to thank **CPL Alastair Loe** and **CPL Low Kai Heng** for their service and contributions during their stint in Army News.

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Exercise KOCHA SINGA 2016

WRITTEN | LTA NEO CHOON YEONG
PHOTOGRAPHY | CONTRIBUTED BY 8SAB

Exercise KOCHA SINGA took place earlier this year at Phitsanulok, Thailand, from 15 to 26 February. The 18th in the series, the bilateral exercise saw the participation of over 800 soldiers from the 40th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment and Headquarters 8th Singapore Armoured Brigade, as well as the Royal Thai Army's 1st Infantry Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment. Apart from combined training and live-firing exercises, both armies also interact regularly through professional exchanges, visits and courses.

The closing ceremony was officiated by Our Chief of Army, BG Melvyn Ong, and RTA Commander-in-Chief General Teerachai Nakwanich. In his closing address, BG Melvyn Ong shared, "Today, as we see the end of the exercise, again, it is a testimony of the good friendship and partnership between the Royal Thai Army and the Singapore Army. To that, I am very grateful for the hospitality, training, and support they have given to our troops."



Exercise PANZER STRIKE 2016

PHOTOGRAPHY | CONTRIBUTED BY 48 SAR

Exercise PANZER STRIKE, conducted earlier this year, from 2 March to 20 April, saw our soldiers from the 3rd Company, 48th Battalion Singapore Armoured Regiment (48 SAR) participate in a bilateral live-firing exercise alongside their German counterparts from the Panzerlehrbataillon 93.

The eighth in the series, this year's Exercise PANZER STRIKE is conducted over two training windows in Spring (2 March to 20 April 2016) and Autumn (14 September to 26 October 2016). It involves more than 1,000 servicemen and trainees from 48 SAR and the Armour Training Institute, as well as 13 Leopard 2S9 Main Battle Tanks and 16 Bionix Infantry Fighting Vehicles.

This year marks a new milestone for the Exercise PANZER STRIKE series, as this is the first time that the SAF is training in the Oberlausitz Military Training Area (OMTA), which is a quarter of the size of Singapore. The area allows the SAF to train more efficiently, enabling concurrent live-firing of up to four ranges for armoured units.



"It's An Honour For The Army"
- BG Melvyn Ong

Artillery Shell Presentation

WRITTEN | LCP KOH SHI JIE AND PTE DARREN SOO
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL LIM HAN CONG AND PTE DARREN SOO

Minister for Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen, presented two Artillery shells fired during the State Funeral Procession of our Founding Prime Minister, late Mr Lee Kuan Yew, to the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and the Singapore Army at the SAFTI Military Institute. Chief of Defence Force, MG Perry Lim and Chief of Army, BG Melvyn Ong received the casings on behalf of the SAF and the Singapore Army respectively.

The Artillery shell presented to the Singapore Army was then emplaced at the Army Museum of Singapore by BG Melvyn Ong. Army Pioneers and members of the State Funeral Organising Committee were invited to grace the ceremony.

The shell will be displayed in the People's Gallery. This is opened to the public and will allow the visitors and younger generations to see how Mr Lee's vision and values continue to be alive, here in Our Army.



Commander PERSCOM Change of Command

WRITTEN | LCP JOEL NG
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL JASON CHUA

On the evening of 9 March at Kranji Camp III, Personnel Command (PERSCOM) witnessed a change in command as COL Clifford Keong handed over his appointment of Commander PERSCOM to SLTC Lee Yem Choo. The Witnessing Officer was our Chief of Army, BG Melvyn Ong.

SLTC Lee Yem Choo was previously the Head MINDEF/SAF Human Resources Shared Services Centre before taking over as Commander PERSCOM. In addition, she is also the first female formation commander in the history of the Singapore Army.

We thank COL Clifford Keong for his contributions to PERSCOM and wish SLTC Lee Yem Choo all the best in her new appointment!

Has anyone wondered how the army reaches out to the youth before their enlistment? Apart from the Army Open House, Army Exhibitions in the Heartland, various seminars and educating the public through the Army Museum, the SAF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE), works with Tertiary Education Institutions under the SAF-School Partnership Programme (SSPP) to engage the youths in Singapore and raise their awareness of the SAF's role in defending our nation.

Different Tertiary Education Institutions are paired up with various units within the Army and students get an opportunity to visit the different camps where the respective units reside or vice versa.

Let's take a look at some of the SSPPs that took place recently:



A soldier helping a student to put on camo!



A Day To Remember

A Guardsman putting his rappelling skills on display to the students



Engaging our youth

The 600-strong students of **Pioneer Junior College (PJC)** caught a glimpse of soldiering first-hand. Although showers visited them in the afternoon, it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the students.

Themed "Glimpse of Green", the SSPP hosted by the soldiers of the 11th Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence Battalion (11C4I Bn) enabled the students to experience a day as a soldier. From trying out combat rations to testing out some of the equipment that 11C4I use, the students sure had a fun day!

As part of the National Education, the 1st Battalion Singapore Guards (1 GDS) hosted the Year 5 **Raffles Institution (RI)** students at Bedok Camp

Making use of this event, the aim of 1GDS was to promote awareness of military defence to the public through various activities that instilled a sense of pride and identity in the soldiers with the student participation.

The Army also showcased their operational capabilities through static displays featuring the SAF's 3G equipment and weapon systems.

Total Defence Day, to some 800 students of **Anglo-Chinese Junior College (ACJC)** and the soldiers of the 48th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment, was "A Day to Remember".

Students and soldiers gathered early in the morning at the Army Museum of Singapore - a special place which houses the Army's heritage and honours the contributions of our soldiers. Students and soldiers stood side by side during the observance parade, reflecting this year's Total Defence Message:

Together, we keep Singapore Strong! ■

WRITTEN | PTE DARREN SOO
PHOTOGRAPHY | PTE WONG JIN CHENG AND CPL AMOS POH WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM 1ST BATTALION, SINGAPORE GUARDS

A Glimpse in the Life of a Soldier

WRITTEN | LCP KOH SHI JIE
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL AMOS POH

Our Army ITE & POLYTECHNIC SPONSORSHIP FAIR 2016



2WO Tan Wen Hui speaking to one of the participants



ME3 Andy Ang Keng Boon sharing his experience with Wei Qing

"I find meaning and purpose in serving an organisation that seeks to preserve the peace and well-being of Singapore and Singaporeans."

This was the common sentiment that was echoed by the many participants who attended Our Army ITE and Polytechnic Sponsorship Fair. They were not only keen to contribute to our country's defence and furthering their education, but also to discover more about the exciting career you can embark on in the Army. Our ambassadors were also on site to share about the various sponsorship and career schemes and opportunities.

2WO Tan Hui Wen elaborated on the approach for the fair, "For a more personalised sharing, we have our ambassadors, who are the beneficiaries of this sponsorship, to be at the exhibition to share about their experiences."

"If you never try, you will never know," shared Weng Cheng Wei Qing, a participant, who was interested in the Signals formation. She added, "The uniformed personnel are very experienced and helpful in answering my queries."



WRITTEN | LCP JOEL NG, LCP KOH SHI JIE
 PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL AMOS POH, CPL LOW KAI HENG, LCP ANDREW TEO

Ready in Peace

Singapore has enjoyed long term stability and peace for a continued period of time despite the unrest amidst the threats of terrorism around the world in recent times. This is because of our defence force, which has remained capable and vigilant even during peacetime. As part of one of the many counter measures against the terrorist threats, the Singapore Armed Forces has the Special Operations Task Force (SOTF).

Established in 2009, this special operations task force consists of elite hand-picked soldiers who have emerged from various selection tests and the grueling Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC).

As part of their training, SOTF carried out some mock scenarios to demonstrate its readiness in combatting any terrorist threats which may occur in Singapore. In the first scenario, "terrorists" stormed a street and started shooting innocent civilians indiscriminately. This was where the troopers from SOTF swiftly stepped in to neutralise the danger in an efficient manner.

In another scenario, the SOTF troopers simulated a rescue of a hostage from a building which involved the use of the Mobile Adjustable Ramp System (MARS) to gain quick access to the higher floors.



SOTF troopers successfully completing their mission.



Using some light explosives to gain access to the higher floors



1 SIR conducting Force Preparation

In addition to such direct counter-measures against terrorist threats, Singapore also maintains the readiness of the active servicemen to ensure that they are well prepared in times of emergency. Activation exercises are carried out regularly for units to ensure that they are operationally ready to respond to any threats. 1st Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (1 SIR) was activated as part of the Army's Standby Force activation exercise to test the unit's state of operational readiness.

As part of our ongoing peacetime operations, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for National Security, Mr Teo Chee Hean, also visited the troops from 811 Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (811 SIR) who were deployed for security operations at Jurong Island as part of our ongoing peacetime operations.

Accompanied by Senior Minister of State for Defence, Mr Ong Ye Kung and Chief of Army, BG Melvyn Ong, DPM Teo interacted with the NSmen and shared the importance of the SAF's role in deterring any threats against Singapore's peace and security.

DPM Teo shared, "There is a heightened threat of terrorist attacks, not just in South East Asia, but around the world. That is why I think it is important that Singaporeans ourselves must become more aware of what we can do if we are caught up in such a situation."

CPL(NS) Sanjeev s/o Hari Nambiar expressed pride in his role in protecting the key installation in Singapore, "The fact that DPM Teo has taken time off to understand our tasks and responsibilities at the various key installations shows the importance in what we do." ■



DPM Teo at the Observation Tower



Our NSmen - Vigilant at all times

Have you ever wondered how the Artillery Formation is able to celebrate its 128th anniversary this year and yet the Singapore Army is only 50 years old? Well, that is because the Artillery Formation has a history that dates back to 1888 with the formation of the Singapore Volunteer Artillery (SVA). In fact the motto of the Artillery Formation, "*In Oriente Primus*" is Latin for "First in the East" and serves as a reminder of the heritage as the oldest formation in the Singapore Army.

In the beginning, when the Artillery Formation was still known as SVA, only Europeans were allowed to join and they were limited mainly to gun drills during training as their main role was to assist in the maintenance of internal security. The Artillery Formation has definitely come a long way since those times.

Throughout the years, the formation has seen many significant milestones, which include the commissioning of various Singapore made weapons, like the Singapore Self-Propelled Howitzer 1 (SSPH1) Primus and the Singapore Light Weight Howitzer (SLWH) Pegasus. In addition, the Singapore Artillery also became the first artillery unit in South-East Asia to achieve Full Operational Capabilities of the High Mobility Artillery System (HIMARS) weapon system. With regards to the training, the Artillery Formation is well prepared and continually participates in overseas deployments and training exercises, for example Exercise Thunder Warrior, where gunners participate in a live-firing exercise in New Zealand.

Today, as our Artillery forges ahead as the "King of the Battlefield", we can look back at the humble beginnings of the Artillery Formation and have a greater appreciation of how far it has come and developed into the premier force that it is now. ■



Precision fire - HIMARS



Fire mobility - PRIMUS

WRITTEN | LCP JOEL NG
PHOTOGRAPHY | LCP ANDREW TEO

128 Years of Artillery

History within our camps: Selarang Camp

WRITTEN | CPL SARAVANAN S/O MUNUSAMY
PHOTOGRAPHY | LUM YILONG ALOYSIUS



Many of us know Selarang Camp as the home of 9th Division/Infantry formation. However the camp is more than that. Over the course of the past 78 years since its completion in 1938, Selarang Camp has been ever present in the history of Singapore and its defence.

Built in 1938, Selarang Barracks was part of the Changi Garrison, a heavily fortified coastal defence where most of the British forces were based during the Battle of Singapore. Selarang Barracks housed the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders, a British Army infantry regiment. After the British surrender of Singapore on 15 February 1942, Allied Prisoners of War (POWs) were ordered by the Japanese to march to Changi for internment. As the British-built Changi Prison was already crowded with Allied POWs and civilians, the surrounding barracks including Selarang Barracks were used by the Japanese as a holding area for Australian and British POWs.



A brief history of Selarang Barracks found within the camp itself



Some photos on display documenting the living conditions of the POWs during their imprisonment in Selarang Barracks (Photos courtesy of Selarang Camp Heritage Centre)

Out of all the events to have taken place in the camp, the most horrifying and well known would be the "Selarang Barracks Square Incident". This famous incident had its origins as a result of events that were quite far removed from Selarang itself. Four escaped prisoners (two of whom had escaped from another camp) had recently been re-arrested and the Japanese, bent on curbing such recalcitrance, had issued an order on 30 August 1942 for all POWs to sign a statement of no-escape.

After the war, Selarang Barracks became the home for most of the Australian Army units of ANZUK, a tripartite force formed by Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom to defend the Asia-Pacific region, until its disbandment in 1974. 9th Division made the move to Selarang Camp in March 1984 and the premises have remained the **Home of the Panthers** ever since.

Forging Ahead! ■



The Officer's Mess building, the only heritage building left untouched since colonial times when Selarang Camp underwent a face lift in 1987. For more than 70 years, this building has been acting as the standing testimony to Selarang Camp's transformation from the colonial to modern.



The stone signage hung on the main entrance of Officer's Mess building bears the Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom. The initials, "G.R" (Stands for George Rex) refers to King George IV (1895-1952). Rex is Latin for "king" and Selarang Barracks was built between 1936 and 1938, during the reign of King George VI. The imposing creature on the left is a lion, and the impressive creature on the right is a chained unicorn.

The Garrison Bell was part of a 30-foot (9.1m) bell tower in Selarang's Garrison Church. The church was built in 1961 to replace a makeshift wartime chapel which was set up during the Japanese Occupation. The church was demolished in 1987, and the bell shifted to Sungei Gedong Camp in Lim Chu Kang before moving back to Selarang Camp in 1999.



The 9th Singapore Division landmark was erected in 1991. This sculpture expresses the determination of the soldiers to forge ahead in the defence of Singapore with courage, strength and ferocity as symbolised by the mascot of the 9th Singapore Division, the panther.



PHOTO BY 3SG LIN WEI BIN (48SAR)

The Soldier Behind the Bomb Suit

WRITTEN | LCP KOH SHI JIE
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL LIM HAN CONG

Little is known about these soldiers who don the green suit. Meet the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team, who are on standby 24/7 to respond to any explosive threat that Singapore may face. In the last year alone, they were responsible for disposing around 30 war relics, which is definitely a sizeable amount! Read on to find out more about what these soldiers do to keep us safe.

The Bomb Call

When a suspected explosive is identified, it's time for the EOD team to get into action. MSG Bryan Tang*, a team commander from the 36th Battalion, Singapore Combat Engineers (36 SCE), elaborated more on how they react once they are at the explosive site, "First, we try to be aware of the situation, then we assess the explosive to determine if it is safe and subsequently we will dispose of it" As a team commander, he also has the added task of examining the explosive alone to minimise exposure to the rest of the team.

The thought of handling an explosive is certainly daunting, especially for those who are disposing the war relics for the first time. "Inexperienced. Nervous," recalled MSG Bryan when he was activated for the first time, "however, once I reached the ground, everything was in order. My second-in-command was quite senior at the time and as a team, we complemented each other."

**Not his actual name*



A 100-kilogram war relic

In the Face of Danger

There is no lack of memorable experiences for these soldiers when they put their life out on the line. MSG Bryan* recounted a few of his lasting memories. "During the Shangri-la Dialogue last year, a vehicle went through the barricade and the driver was subsequently stopped with lethal force. The vehicle was also assessed to have explosives. At this point in time when I donned my bomb suit, I had worries and asked my medic to contact my wife to tell her what had happened."

While King Albert Park holds fond memories for many Singaporeans who lived or schooled in the vicinity, unknown to many, a 100kg war relic was found there last June. MSG Bryan, who was in the team involved in disposing this explosive, shared,

"We need to build a sandbag trench mount and fill a thousand sandbags – and this is definitely the tiring part. Usually, when we have to fill this amount of sandbags, we will not be able to sleep overnight, otherwise, we will not be in time to dispose of the explosives."



Example of protective works for the disposal of the war relics.

Key Pillars of Strength

With such a dangerous task on hand, support from family members, friends and the members of the public are key in motivating them to continue their task with proficiency and courage. MSG Bryan shared how his mother was not supportive at first as "she felt it was very dangerous", but after explaining that "there is a set of safety procedures to follow", she became more supportive of his job.

As some of the EOD operations are publicised on the Singapore Army Facebook, MSG Bryan is often encouraged by the many positive comments that the public leaves on the page. He shared, "Once I read them, I feel good too."

When we sleep safe at night, let us not forget these soldiers who are tirelessly protecting Singapore. ■

**Not his actual name*



A Remotely Operated Vehicle, for use in response to bomb threats.

Soldier Strong: | Strong Body, | Strong Heart, Strong Mind



STRENGTH

streŋθ,streŋkθ/
noun

1. the quality or state of being physically strong.

"cycling can help you build up your strength"

Synonym: power, brawn, muscle, muscularity, burliness, sturdiness, robustness, toughness, hardiness, and more

2. the capacity of an object or substance to withstand great force or pressure.

"they were taking no chances with the strength of the retaining wall"

Synonym: robustness, sturdiness, firmness, toughness, soundness, solidity, solidness, durability, stability, and more

STRENGTH: The very word itself conjures up a very powerful image - An image that has positive connotations and can inspire confidence. Military Forces around the world aspire to show their strength; after all, an armed force that isn't strong is ineffective and will not be able to carry out its task of protecting their country's sovereignty or their people.

Our Army's focus this year is **ARMY READY, SOLDIER STRONG**. An Army is only as strong as its basic component – the soldier. Like any strong chain, it is only as strong as its weakest link. However, being strong is not just about brawn and physicality. Strength of character is important. Being strong is also about being committed to a cause, and having the resilience to overcome any adversity.

SOLDIER STRONG looks at three components – **STRONG BODY, STRONG HEART and STRONG MIND**.

Our Army already has existing programmes to build upon these but as always will continue to hone and fine tune, as well as add new initiatives to further strengthen (that word again!) the focus on SOLDIER STRONG.

In this issue, we will look at all the components and share some recent illustrations.

One of the recent initiatives is the revised Infantry Training System. This was conducted by HQ Infantry and assisted by various stake holders. (Story in ARMY NEWS Issue 237/2016) In this issue we also cover Speed, Agility and Quickness as one of the components in the revised ITS. (Story on page 29)

Our Army now has yet another event that we can look forward to. The **Dragon-Boat Regatta** has been recently introduced into the ARMY Calendar of Events for the new work year. Already you can see Our Soldiers from the various formations brimming with energy and enthusiasm, and putting their all into training for the event. ARMY NEWS visited the teams during once of their training sessions and managed to speak to a couple of the participants.



SOC - one of the many key fixtures in the revised ITS



MAJ Vincent Ho getting warmed up before they board the boat

MAJ Vincent Ho from the GS(Ops) team shared, **"I started Dragonboat (DB) back in 2004 when I got selected to compete for the NTU DB team. Upon my graduation in 2008, I joined the SAFSA (Cdo) team to continue competitive rowing. I picked up DB as I enjoyed the training, camaraderie and teamwork. Contrary to common belief and the general impression of Dragonboaters as big hunky guys, technique and teamwork is actually more important than individual fitness."**

CPT Loh Ying, who has been involved in Dragonboating for 10 years said **"Teammates are the best thing to ever happen to you. Seeing each other almost every day and going through thick and thin together builds bonds that last a lifetime. There is no superstar or MVP in Dragonboat as it is impossible to measure how much effort each person puts in, because everyone less the drummer and coxswain does the same thing on the boat. You just have to trust each other to put in your 100%"**



Armed with her paddle, CPT Loh Ying (centre) is in her element

She also shared "I first wanted to try this as all my previous experience was very much with individual sports. However what struck me from the beginning was how quickly you got blisters. Lots and lots of blisters! Sometimes they would rupture and wouldn't heal in time before the next training session. We would just have to tape them up and just carry on. Once I started though, there was no going back."

MAJ Vincent Ho added, "DB achieves teamwork and bonding through tough training. I reckon that it is a great decision for our Army to introduce Dragonboat Regatta and DB as part of the training syllabus." Like any other team sports, Dragonboating is a shared experience and also belies the idea that the team relies only on brute strength. What is more important is technique and teamwork. Hence the expression "Pulling Together" is given a new dimension when you apply it to Dragonboating. ■

SOLDIER STRONG!

Soldier Strong: Strong Body, | Strong Heart, | Strong Mind



Serving the People: SLTC Lee Yem Choo

WRITTEN | CPL ALASTAIR LOE AND LCP JOEL NG
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL AMOS POH AND CPL JASON CHUA

9 March 2016 was a significant milestone not only for SLTC Lee, but also for the Singapore Army as we celebrate the appointment of our very **first female formation commander!**

SLTC Lee has definitely come a long way from being a junior staff officer to a formation commander now. She joined the Singapore Armed Forces in 1991 after graduating from the National University of Singapore. SLTC Lee started her career as a Staff Officer in the Intelligence community but her passion for people and HR led her to hold key appointments in the HR community, including being the first female Head of Career Planning Branch of Army Officers Management Centre (AOMC) and Head of MINDEF/SAF Human Resource Shared Services Centre (HRSSC).



SLTC Lee believes in "hands-on" leadership

"My aim is to build a strong HR culture among all HR practitioners. I am very excited to be able to helm this as the next Comd PERSCOM as I know that a strong HR team, with a heart for the people we serve, is a cornerstone of a strong Army. It is and will always be the people I serve that motivate me to do a good job."

- SLTC Lee Yem Choo, Commander PERSCOM

When asked about how she felt about being the Army's first female formation commander, SLTC Lee said, "It is an honour to be the Army's first female formation commander. I am thankful for the career opportunities that the Army has given me throughout my 25 years of service. However, gender has never been an issue with me. This is because I see myself as a SAF officer who just happens to be a HR Officer and who just happens to be a Lady Officer. And as a SAF officer, I hold the same values as every other SAF officers... leading by example, discipline and care for my soldiers. As a HR officer, my emphasis is on building a strong service culture in the HR community so that we can improve our services to better serve our people. **At the end of the day, it is all about our people. It warms my heart just by knowing that I have made a difference in the people's lives."**

As Commander PERSCOM, SLTC Lee is determined to take HR services to even greater heights.



SLTC Lee with her family

Other heart-warming stories that we came across only help to reinforce Strong Heart



From 823 SIR...

2SG (NS) Samuel Lin was the Chief Clerk for 823 SIR. Despite being a non-combatant, he always made it a point to go the extra mile in his role. In one instance, he realized that there were issues with company nominal rolls just prior to one In Camp Training (ICT) Samuel realised that it was important for this matter to be resolved as soon as possible so he took his own personal leave to settle these issues before the ICT commenced.



823 SIR

Also from 823 SIR...

CPL (NS) Ridhwan from 823 SIR found himself in a very difficult situation. It was a huge dilemma for him as he was scheduled for his unit's evaluation test (ATEC) but his mother was critically ill. His mother knew how important the ATEC was for Ridhwan. She encouraged him and gave him her blessings and told him not to worry. Even so, it was a tough decision that he needed to make in order to be there for his men.



From 702 Guards...

CPL (NS) Bryan Chng of 702 Guards was the runner for his Commanding Officer LG (NS) Neo Kian Hong. Bryan volunteered as a ROVER and served for 20 years as a CO's runner. He served with distinction and completed 5 ATECs.



From 8 SIR...

Although he enlisted as a PES E soldier, **3SG Aqeel** from 8 SIR was persistent and kept seeing his MO to have his PES status upgraded. He was finally upgraded. He went through Basic Military Training and then he went to the Specialist Cadet School (SCS). He was offered the opportunity to cross over to Officer Cadet School but he decided that he preferred to remain a specialist. He graduated from SCS with the Silver Bayonet and is currently training soldiers in 8 SIR.

Soldier Strong: Strong Body, Strong Heart, | Strong Mind |



2LT Aaron (right) going on a run with his men

Overcoming the Odds 2LT Aaron Cheuk

WRITTEN | CPL ALASTAIR LOE AND VALERIE JEE
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL AMOS POH

2LT Cheuk suffered from Pneumothorax, a medical condition which occurs when air leaks into the space between the lung and chest wall, causing the lung to collapse. He suffered a second attack during his Basic Military Training (BMT) and was evacuated to Changi General Hospital (CGH) after a review at the Pulau Tekong Medical Centre.

2LT Cheuk enlisted with dreams to serve as a leader. His hopes were dashed after he was medically downgraded for his condition and vocationalised as an Administrative Support Assistant (ASA) at Hendon Camp. However, during his 8 months as an ASA, he continually expressed his interest in reviewing his temporary PES status, going through BMT again and eventually, becoming an Officer. Being an Officer required 2LT Cheuk to extend his National Service in order to serve as an Officer for a minimum of 6 months. Many of his peers were unsupportive as they felt he would be better off discharging his clerical duties, and there was no point in delaying his Operationally Ready Date (ORD). His parents were also against the idea as they feared a relapse. However, 2LT Cheuk was determined to finish what he had already started, "I was quite bent on experiencing the whole journey to become an Officer."



After a series of medical reviews, he finally got the green light to upgrade his PES status. Having abstained from physical training for a few months, 2LT Cheuk was not physically fit. Hence, he started a training regime to prepare for his BMT recourse, and subsequently, the Officer Cadet Course (OCC). The journey to regain his physical fitness required great courage and hard work, but the immense support from his commanders helped him to persevere through the tough training.

2LT Cheuk recounts that the criticism, cynicism and pessimism he faced throughout his journey were the greatest hurdles he had to overcome. Many were certain that he had made a decision he would later regret, but he wanted to prove that "there is nothing to fear but fear itself" and live his dream. When asked if he had any regrets from choosing the road less travelled, 2LT Cheuk shared that he has no regrets and continues to find the strong camaraderie in the SAF a great motivation.

2LT Cheuk commissioned as an Armoured Infantry Officer and is currently a Platoon Commander with 41st Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment (41 SAR). ■

"Finding a purpose in what you do and not letting any obstacles impede you from chasing your dreams,"

is what 2LT Cheuk strongly believes in, and hopes to leave this belief with individuals in situations similar to his. We wish 2LT Cheuk all the best in his journey as an Officer, as he continues to overcome daily challenges with courage, fortitude and determination.

In Jan 2016, 2LT Aaron Cheuk was commissioned and vowed to discharge his duties to the Nation with excellence. 2LT Cheuk's journey to Officership was not an easy one. In fact, he proved himself to be a man of great courage, fortitude and determination, by overcoming all odds to be commissioned as an Officer.



Promoting Safety through the MES Way

WRITTEN | CPL LIM HAN CONG
PHOTOGRAPHY | PTE WONG JIN CHENG

On 10 March, the Maintenance and Engineering Support Formation (MES) held their annual MES Safety Day in Kranji Camp III. It was jointly organised with 1st Army Maintenance Base (1 AMB). The theme for this year's safety Day was "Make Every Day Safe". The intent was to remind servicemen that every individual played an important role in safety; be it during training outfield, maintenance in the workshops, office administration and even commuting to and from work. The focus for this year's safety day was to promote safety to motorcycle riders as well as their commanders.

Chief Maintenance & Engineering Officer (CMEO), ME7 Tjhin Poi Chung in his address to all commanders shared, "I would like to remind everyone that there is no greater value than your own life. Nothing should be as valuable to you as ensuring that you leave home for work and return safe to your families and loved ones."



ME7 Tjhin Poi Chung delivering his opening address

Commanding Officer, 1AMB, ME6 Ignatius Tham highlighted safety pointers in relation to daily commuting on the motorcycle. He stressed that the behavior of a rider was the key to safe riding as a high percentage of motorcycle accidents occurred due to riders' negligence. ME6 Tham singled out common illegal modifications and presented how the handling of a motorcycle can be compromised when a motorcycle is modified from its original factory specifications.

To heighten the awareness of safety in motorcycle riding, the audience was also treated to an exciting display of bikes and safety equipment at the CSS Lodge Mess. Soldiers of MES proudly displayed their personal rides which ranged from exotic Harleys to the speed defying Hayabusa. Local prominent biking communities also lent their weight behind the motorcycle display to spread the message on safe riding. Ducati Singapore, Boon Siew Motors and even the infamous Regina Specialists (Ah-Boy Helmets) were of notable mention.

Good governance promotes road safety and the enforcers from Military Police (MP) Command and the Traffic Police of Singapore displayed their gleaming white steeds. Both shared on the risks of riding and useful road safety advice for all motorists.

It was an afternoon like no other. Motorcyclists and commanders mingled on a common topic of safety supported by industry partners who shared the same focus. It was a rare opportunity to be surrounded by motorcycles, and a timely reminder of the importance of fostering a culture of safety. ■



BG Lam looking at one of the exhibits



One of the latest motorbikes on display

ULTIMAX 100 Mk. III

WRITTEN | CPL AMOS POH
PHOTOGRAPHY | CONTRIBUTED BY DEFENCE MEDIA CENTRE



SPECIFICATIONS

- WEIGHT: 4.90KG
- LENGTH: 1024MM
- MAXIMUM FIRING RANGE: 460M
- RATE OF FIRE: 400-600 ROUNDS PER MINUTE
- MUZZLE VELOCITY: 970M/S
- OPERATING PRINCIPLE: GAS-OPERATED, ROTATING BOLT

The **Ultimax 100 Mk. III**, more commonly known as the **Section Assault Weapon (SAW)** is a Singapore-made fully-automatic light machine gun (LMGs). Unlike heavy machine guns, LMGs can be employed by a single soldier without any assistance. It is able to provide suppressive firepower for cover and advance purposes, fulfilling its role as an Infantry support weapon.

The Mark 1 version of Ultimax 100 was designed by American weapon designer James Sullivan, whom previously played a part in the design of the AR18 and M16 assault rifles. The Ultimax 100 was first produced in 1982 by Chartered Industries of Singapore (CIS). Now known as Singapore Technologies Kinetics (ST Kinetics), the company continues to manufacture the Ultimax 100 as well as SAF's most commonly used SAR21.

Building on the foundation of the original design, the Mark III is a modified version currently used by the SAF. It feeds on 5.56x45mm calibre from a 100 round drum magazine and features a "Constant Recoil" concept. By sacrificing the rate of fire to a relatively slow rate of 400-600rpm, the "Constant Recoil" principle effectively eliminates recoil and gives SAW an extraordinary controllability in automatic fire. It also features a quick change barrel of two lengths, a 508mm standard barrel and a 330mm short barrel to ensure maximum efficiency under different situations. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1 Weighing an impressive lightweight of 6.8kg when loaded, the Ultimax 100 Mark 3 is the world's lightest machine gun.
- 2 Singapore's SAW is also recognised by other countries for its effectiveness through campaigns in Indonesia, Philippines, Afghanistan and Sri Lankan Civil War. Today, the Ultimax 100 is also used by armed forces at least 12 countries which include Brunei, Peru, Philippines, Thailand and Morocco.
- 3 The SAW has a most peculiar accessory; a bayonet lug that allows attachment of standard M16 compatible bayonets.
- 4 The "Constant Recoil" principle in layman terms, is a design that delays recoil to make the impact more manageable, therefore improving accuracy. Instead of the shooter receiving a strong jolt on his shoulder, he receives a slow, constant push.
- 5 Due to its many positive features such as weight, accuracy and versatility in combat, the SAW is widely regarded as the best LMG designed to date.
- 6 The Ultimax 100 has been featured in full-length films such as Reign of Fire and Austin Powers in Goldmember. Video games like the recent Ghost Recon, Battlefield 4, Far Cry 4 and Watch Dogs also featured our local weapon.



Our WOSPEC: MSG Mevinjit Singh Dhillon

WRITTEN | LCP ANDREW TEO
PHOTOGRAPHY | CONTRIBUTED BY MSG MEVINJIT SINGH DHILLON

Dressed in his Smart 4 uniform, **MSG Mevinjit Singh Dhillon** greeted us in a jovial mood, his affable exterior seemingly at odds with a soldier determined to constantly keep improving. With the encouragement of his superiors, he took up the opportunity to further advance his personal development.

"There is a saying that when we stop learning, we stop living. So I thought, why not keep trying to learn new things!"

said the 26-year-old Artillery Specialist.

These courses ranged from identifying various aircrafts, ships and vehicles in pictures as part of a Basic Imagery Interpretation Module, to the Forward Controller Course, which taught him how to direct the pilot of a fighter or attack helicopter. MSG Mevinjit even won the Best in Knowledge Award for the latter course! "When I'm not giving courses, I'm taking courses to be more deployable," he added.

Even now, MSG Mevinjit is pursuing a part-time degree in Aerospace Systems. His undying hunger for self-improvement is evident through all his efforts during his time in service. "I am defined by what the organization has given to me and I deeply appreciate it. The support and understanding from my superiors, my mother and my wife has given me the opportunity to thrive to the best of my ability."

When the opportunity to be deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Blue Ridge arose, MSG Mevinjit volunteered his services as an Operator for the Weapon Location Radar in the Multi National Base at Tarin Kowt. During his one of his shifts there, six 107mm rockets were fired into the base by insurgents. MSG Mevinjit provided early warning signals which successfully gave contractors enough time to evacuate before one of the rockets landed and destroyed their barracks, for which he received the Chief of Army Letter of Commendation.

Now as a senior trainer in the Artillery Vocational Training School, MSG Mevinjit aims to impart his experience and wisdom to his trainees. ■



MSG Mevinjit receiving an award from then Chief of Army, MG Ravinder Singh



Lowering the legs of the ARTHUR platform in Afghanistan



MSG Mevinjit (then 2SG) with his family at an awards ceremony

"[I have] had a journey full of life-changing experiences, one that no ordinary human being has gone through. As much as I can, I want to pass down everything I know. And it is amazing how with every batch of new trainees that come, I too have a new learning experience from them."

- MSG Mevinjit Singh Dhillon

I TRACK, THEREFORE I AM

CONTRIBUTED | MAJ (DR) ALEXANDER GORNY, HD SOLDIER PERFORMANCE CENTRE, HQ ARMY MEDICAL SERVICES

Just Another Health-Fad?

2015 was the year when **activity trackers** made their big debut in Singapore. Suddenly we were lost in myriad counts: steps, floors, kilometres, calories and beats of the heart. The promise of better health took root in a time when we were constantly reminded of growing waistlines and rising healthcare costs.

2016 looks to be year where the country caught on. Employers, parents, girl-friends and running buddies swear by their devices. They have urged us to hop onto the bandwagon. **Before heading out to make that not-so-insignificant purchase, here are a few important points to note:**



Counting does not make you fitter.

Take away the hype and advertising and you will quickly realise that all a tracker really does is to count: 1, 2, 3, 4, ... 125, ... 999 etc. It might be said that steps, heart-beats and minutes of exercise were not easy to count before the advent of the miniature accelerometer. Nevertheless, counting per se will not make you fitter, the same way as counting the money in your wallet will not make you richer. What trackers do, however, is make you more aware of how far you have walked or how lazy your day at the office has actually been.

Comparisons can make you feel jealous, proud and ambivalent all at the same time.

The whole point of counting is to draw meaningful comparisons. You might choose to compare against your former self or family members. Whichever the comparison you make, the ultimate goal is to score a victory in a game of numbers. In a competition among friends it will become evident who is the most prolific stepper, climber or gym-nut. It is a game of winners and losers which might feel tiresome after the first week of play.

Guilt and fear are very powerful emotions.

Some trackers are programmed to incentivise the wearer to hit a specific target, 10,000 daily steps for example. Depending on your personality, the realisation that you have not met your activity target could either prod you into action or supply a profound sense of guilt. Tracking evokes a strong sense of self-efficacy and therefore the fear of failure in itself, might motivate us towards success. In Singlish we would say the tracker gives you another reason to feel *kiasu*.

Facilitating, not driving change!

Tracking will help you increase your levels of activity, eat healthier and sleep better only if you already know how to achieve goals, but never got around to measuring them. If adopted as part of a structured exercise or wellness programme, the tracker might make initial changes more visible and help encourage you on your path to a healthier, more mindful way of life. Tracking on its own is at best unreliable, because counting, comparing and *kiasu*-ism is just exhausting in the long run.

Exploring the environment and forming new habits.

There has never been a better time to explore Singapore's great outdoors. There are more than a hundred parks and gardens to be discovered. You might just find one on your commute to work. If you can add one or two dedicated walks per week, you might just be able to tap into the rewards of time spent outdoors.

Trading sedentary time for active time.

Trade other forms of transport with walks connecting to public transport and reach your physical activity / step goals efficiently. This way you will not have to cut back on time spent family or household chores. The key to breaking sedentary habits is to recognise where additional bits of activity might be built in to your daily routines.

COMMON PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY DEVICE USERS:

- Devices are inaccurate in measuring steps and distances.
- Having to recharge the device every 3-7 days is painful.
- The devices are either prone to failure or insufficiently rugged.
- I feel my steps don't count unless I have my tracker on.

UNINTENDED BENEFITS:

- Look, I have a cool new watch.
- My tracker has caller-ID.
- I feel healthier whenever I have my tracker on.



An example of the activity tracker the author uses.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the day, it takes a little more than a piece of plastic to nudge a person away from his or her entrenched habits.

The author of this article needs to replace his tracker for the second time in 6 months. He is hooked on the concept, but the devices are unable to keep up with his active lifestyle.



WRITTEN | LCP ANDREW TEO
PHOTOGRAPHY | CPL JASON CHUA

As the name suggests, this modality trains the soldier's **Speed, Agility and Quickness (SAQ)**. This is one of the modalities in the revised **Infantry Training System (ITS)**.

Sprints, dashes, twists and turns trains how fast you go, how fast you change direction and how fast you react. All these skills are definitely essential in training a stronger soldier. It includes the ability to cover linear distances in the shortest time possible (Speed), change direction quickly through efficient deceleration and acceleration (Agility) and respond rapidly to a given stimulus with explosive movement (Quickness).

It is important to remember that the improvement of running speed is a complex process that is controlled by the brain and nervous system. In order for a runner to move more quickly, the leg muscles have to contract much faster, but the brain and nervous systems have to learn to control these faster movements efficiently. Thus, the exercises include many short sprints to train this mind-muscle co-ordination.



Soldiers training to improve their reaction time and ability to change directions quickly



The Agility Ladder allows for a wide variety of movement patterns, perfect for training

Agility is the ability to change the direction of the body in an efficient and effective manner and to achieve this you require a combination of balance, speed, strength and co-ordination. With the Agility Ladder, it promotes a wide range of different foot and movement patterns.

Lastly, quickness refers to the rapid response of your body's overall awareness. Instant reflexive reactions are trained in this aspect of training. For example: changing direction at a moments' notice while running.

Many of the exercises included in the new ITS SAQ trains these qualities concurrently. Speed, Agility and Quickness is essential to every soldier's training. It is especially evident during firefights when soldiers are required to sprint, dash for cover, negotiate obstacles, etc. Possessing higher levels of SAQ may increase one's survivability in the field through minimising exposure to threats. ■

31 Years Serving Well: Mr. Thomas Tan

WRITTEN | PTE DARREN SOO
PHOTOGRAPHY | LCP KOH SHI JIE, WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MR THOMAS TAN

If you ask anyone who works at the **Central Manpower Base (CMPB)** about the noodle stall there, they will be quick to tell you that it is cheap and delicious! Mr. Thomas Tan runs the stall but did you know that he has been running his noodle stall since 1985 when CMPB was still housed at Dempsey Road?



Porkball Noodles, \$2.00 / \$2.50



Kuay Chap, \$2.50/\$3.00

Mr. Thomas shared his story with us. After being laid off from his previous office job, Mr. Thomas went to work at a cafeteria for about 3 years before a friend introduced him to work at CMPB.

However, it was not a bed of roses for Mr. Thomas when he initially started. Getting to know what his customer liked was just one example of the many hurdles he had to overcome.

"Business back then was so brisk!" said Mr. Thomas as he remembered how lively it used to be. Family members would be sending off their loved ones, and all of them would eat in the canteen before embarking on their National Service journey.

A normal day for Mr. Thomas would begin at the market, purchasing fresh ingredients as early as 4am before opening up for business at 730am. On average, it takes about 2 hours to prepare and another 2 hours of cleaning before closing up for the day. It is quite an admirable task considering that he has been doing this for 31 years already! When asked what his motivation to continue was, he replied, "The sense of familiarity that we (the store owners) built over the years makes me very comfortable working here. I see them (customers) as family already."

Knowing that Full-Time National Servicemen (NSFs) do not earn much, Mr. Thomas strives to make the food as cheap as possible, yet ensuring it tastes good!

He shared with ARMY NEWS that in order to keep his prices reasonable for the NSFs, some food items such as Pork Rib Noodles and Satay Beehoon had to be taken off the menu. His current menu consists of commonplace entries such as Pork Ball noodles, Mee Rebus and Lor Mee.

To find out how good was his food, we interviewed a few of his patrons! CPL Devin Lim shared, "It's unique as they added mushroom and carrots which reminds me of my mother's cooking! Also the homemade pork balls are chewy and have a nice texture."

Another patron, LCP Koh Shi Jie expressed his thoughts, "You can't find such decent kway chap elsewhere with this price!" ■

Did you know that your friendly noodle store uncle is also an accomplished ten-pin bowler? When not working at his stall, he likes to go bowling with his wife. **On average, he scores around 190 to 200!** Can you match up to him? Well I can't for sure!

IN CASE YOU MISSED OUT...



The Singapore Army

16 February 2016

Total Defence Day, to some 800 students of Anglo-Chinese Junior College (ACJC) and the soldiers of the 48th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment, was "A Day to Remember".

Album by: LCP Koh Shi Jie and CPL Amos Poh (Army News)



748 Likes 6 Comments 60 Shares 183,411 Total Reach

Instagram

[oursingaporearmy](#)



831 likes

[oursingaporearmy](#)

SOTF troopers operating with the Peacekeeper Protected Response Vehicle during a counter-terrorism training.

Photo by: CPL Amos Poh (Army News)

#OurSgArmy #ReadyDecisiveRespected



WHAT OTHER'S SAY

12 March 2016

"I'm out to serve my country. Be right back!"

Chua Alvin

Back for ICT, salute to you Boss! Can't get someone to help out hence have to close for two weeks. Duty, Honour and Country!

2 April 2016

Appreciating our NSmen

Winnie Hoe II

Thank you for organising the event. it was nice to find out what nsmen actually do during their ict. you guys work hard! thank you, nsmen, for your service. also, many thanks to all employers for supporting us! now, everyone can have a peace of mind. ?

7 April 2016

First Responders in Counter-Terrorism Efforts.

Teo Choo Mee

A BIG Thank You to SAF for protecting Singapore and all families a place we call HOME. All Singaporeans must learn to RESPECT our SAF, maybe start from our Primary Schools. Our YOUNG Generation must learn to LOVE and PROTECT their motherland. smile emoticon.

8 April 2016

Redoubling our Counter-Terrorism Efforts

Glory Lory

A sense of patriotism. It is not just their job but ours as citizens of Singapore to stand up for this country and the people. It is thus our responsibility in making sure that we as one, fight as one and accept everyone as equal.