



[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

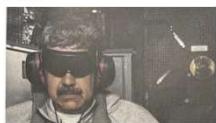
Facilitators may use the slide's background image of an HDB estate experiencing power outage to set the stage and introduce Total Defence (TD).

- Imagine this: It is a regular weekday evening, and like most Singaporeans, you are at home having your dinner with your family. Suddenly, everything goes quiet and dark! The power is not working, and the WiFi connection is dead. You look out of the window and see that the lights in the HDB blocks in front of you have gone out as well. Surrounded by darkness, what will you do?
- In this volatile and uncertain world, we need to be ready for crises and disruptions. If and when they happen, we need to be able to meet them head-on and emerge stronger.
- As we commemorate Total Defence Day on 15 February, let's remind ourselves on **our collective responsibility to play our part to keep Singapore safe and sovereign.**

We are living in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) times

Geopolitical Tensions

US captured Venezuela's Maduro after strike, Trump says



The Straits Times, 3 Jan 2026

Disruptions

Large parts of Spain and Portugal hit by power outage



Channel NewsAsia, 4 Nov 2025

Disinformation

GE2025: Surge in AI-generated videos related to elections after polls called



Channel NewsAsia, 21 Apr 2025

Economic Pressures

Growth in Singapore key exports seen slowing to 0%-2% in 2026 on US tariff impact



The Straits Times, 21 Nov 2025

Cyber Threats

Singapore actively dealing with ongoing cyberattack on critical infrastructure: Shanmugam



Channel NewsAsia, 18 Jul 2025

Climate Change

Long-term planning and political will needed to tackle climate change in Singapore: Zaig



The Straits Times, 22 Sep 2025

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[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

Facilitators can use this slide to explain the complex and uncertain landscape that Singapore operates in, to highlight why we should not take our peace and security for granted.

- Today, Singapore faces an **increasingly complex and dangerous world**.
- Recent global events have shown that the **rules-based world order that had allowed Singapore to thrive has fragmented**. International laws and norms have given way to the “law of the jungle”, with countries’ self-interests taking precedence. This has potentially serious security implications for a small country such as Singapore, making us **more vulnerable to external pressures and instability**.
- Amidst increased economic pressures as well as global and regional tensions, **hybrid threats and climate change challenges** continue to impact the way we live, work and play.
- Internally, **disinformation and foreign influence threaten to undermine our social cohesion** by exploiting our faultlines.

Additional sources:

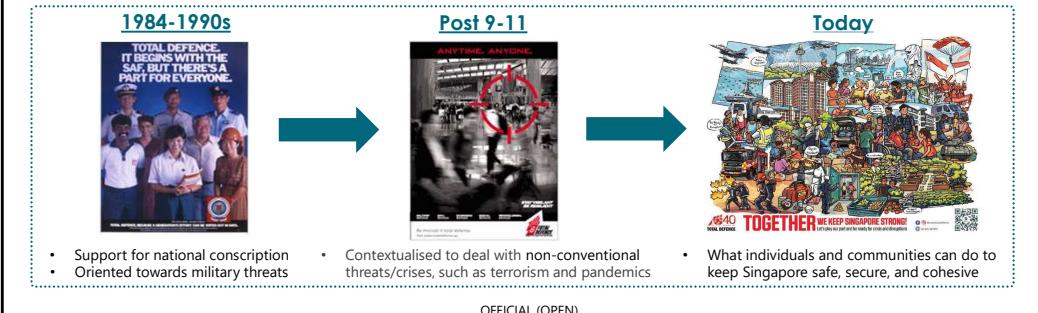
Challenges facing Singapore and our response

- <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/not-business-usual-geopolitical-shocks-mean-spore-must-be-prepared-troubled-times-ahead-says-ng-eng-hen-5609791>
- <https://www.mindf.gov.sg/news-and-events/latest-releases/26nov25-speech/>
- <https://www.mfa.gov.sg/newsroom/press-statements-transcripts-and-photos/fm-cos-2025-speech-03-mar-2025/>

Total Defence is our collective response against these evolving threats

Total Defence (TD) was introduced in 1984 as "the national defence concept" to rally all Singaporeans behind the SAF should war occur.

Over time, TD has evolved to a **whole-of-society approach** to address new and emerging threats. Total Defence involves every Singaporean playing a part, **individually and collectively**, to build a strong, secure, and cohesive nation. When we are strong, we are able to deal with any crisis.



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[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

- However, **Singapore is not without power and agency to determine our fate.**
- As Minister for Defence Mr Chan Chun Sing said at the 14th Shangri-La Dialogue Sherpa meeting on 19 Jan 2026, "This is a period of profound change. **But this is not a period of hopelessness...We can reinforce what works, adapt what no longer does, and shape new norms for the challenges ahead.**"
- To navigate our challenges and emerge stronger, we depend on every Singaporean to play their part. **TD is the whole-of-nation framework to rally Singaporeans to come together in times of crises and disruptions.**
- First introduced on 22 Jan 1984 to rally Singaporeans behind the Singapore Armed Forces should we face a military threat in a conventional war scenario, TD is now contextualised to also address non-conventional threats such as terrorism, pandemics, and hybrid threats.
- TD Day is commemorated on 15 Feb each year to remind us of the day we fell to the Japanese on 15 Feb 1942, and that we should never take our defence for granted.

Additional sources:

States retain agency in fragmented world

- <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/chan-chun-sing-all-states-retain-agency-fragmented-world-sherpa-meeting-5870346>

Six Pillars of Total Defence



A strong and credible defence force of committed Regulars and National Servicemen, supported by the entire nation.



A cohesive and caring society, with strong bonds uniting diverse groups who live in harmony with one another.



A vigilant and prepared society, with a crisis-ready mindset.



A digitally-prepared population that is discerning and responsible online.



A robust, resilient, and globally competitive economy.



The collective will to act, the resolve to defend our way of life and national interests, and the fighting spirit to overcome challenges together.

[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

Facilitators may use this slide to highlight how Singaporeans can contribute to TD through the six pillars. You may focus on specific TD pillars that are more directly relevant to the target audience, e.g., Military Defence for SAF regulars and full-time National Servicemen, Digital Defence for youths, Economic Defence for working adults. Facilitators may also wish to quiz the audience on which of the six pillars is the newest to be added. Answer: Digital Defence, in 2019

- Digital Defence is a whole-of-nation effort to protect and defend ourselves and our nation online. It requires Singaporeans to: (a) practise good cybersecurity habits; (b) guard against fake news and disinformation; and (c) consider the impact of our actions on the community.

Additional source:

Details on six TD pillars

- <https://www.mindef.gov.sg/defence-matters/defence-topics/total-defence/>

Total Defence has evolved to meet the changing needs of Singapore

In a world often divided by intolerance and self-interest, TD has stood strong and been strengthened as a result of these stress tests.

In recent years, TD has placed greater emphasis on readiness for disruptions to everyday life. Alongside preparing for disruptions to power and digital connectivity, there is a renewed focus on fostering a "We-First" mentality and mutual care within the community.

If and when crises and disruptions hit our shores, every one of us must be prepared, stay united, and play our part.



How can my daily actions contribute to Total Defence?

How should we, as a nation, ensure that Singapore is ready and stay resilient during crises and disruptions?



[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

Facilitators may share how TD has rallied Singaporeans together to face challenging national crises in the past:

- TD has seen us through SARS, the fall-out from the 9/11 attacks, the economic crises of 1997 and 2008, the haze in recent years, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Each time, Singaporeans overcame the challenges and emerged stronger and more united (refer to slide 6 for quote by DPM Mr Gan Kim Yong).
- TD has evolved through the years and remains relevant to deal with present challenges to Singapore.

Facilitators can talk more on a "We-First" mentality:

- A "We-First" mindset is where Singaporeans put 'we' before 'me' in their everyday deeds and actions.
- Together, we build a culture where success is measured not only by personal achievement, but by what we do together for the common good.

On the proposed answers to the scenario where crises and disruptions hit our shores:

- **Daily actions:** Facilitators may use slide 4 (with the six TD pillars) and invite the audience to share what they can do under each pillar of TD.
- **National Approach:** As a nation, Singapore can ensure readiness and resilience through:
 - **Building robust systems and infrastructure** that can withstand disruptions, e.g., secure supply chains and diversified energy resources.
 - **Fostering social cohesion and trust** through inclusive policies and effective communication between different groups, and supporting ground-up initiatives that support harmony.
 - **Investing in human capital and adaptability** through policies and initiatives such as lifelong learning programmes, education enhancements, and personal development.
 - **Building effective institutions** and structures that can react quickly during crisis.
 - **Cultivating external partnerships** and ensure that Singapore remains a reliable and principled partner that can add value on the global stage.

Additional sources:

"We-First" mindset

- <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/tharman-parliament-speech-we-first-economy-5334431>
- <https://www.mccy.gov.sg/about-us/news-and-resources/unity-and--we-first--mindset-key-for-singapore-to-stay-exceptional-in-a-changed-world/>

“

Let us take heart in how we have come together over the last six decades as one nation through many crises and emerged stronger, including the **racial riots in the 1960s**, the **financial crises in 1997 and 2008**, and the recent **COVID-19 pandemic**. Through these crises, **our shared values of unity and mutual support** remain the cornerstone of our nation's strength.

”

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Gan Kim Yong, at Exercise SG Ready and Total Defence Day Commemoration Event on 15 Feb 2025



The question is...

ARE YOU READY FOR DISRUPTIONS?

Image generated using generative AI (Gemini)

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Exercise SG Ready (ESR) 2026

Watch Video on ESR 2026



Launched in 2024, Exercise SG Ready encourages individuals, communities, and businesses to translate Total Defence into action by looking out for one another ("We First") and putting contingency plans for disruptions in place against hybrid threats.

For more information:
go.gov.sg/exercisesgready

ESR 2026 will be conducted from 1 to 15 Feb 2026 and is based on an exercise scenario set against the backdrop of geopolitical uncertainties and hybrid threats. The exercise emphasises preparedness to disruptions, while highlighting the importance of looking out for others.

Scenario Focus



Power Disruption



Digital Connectivity Disruption



Public Security

Through realistic scenarios, participants will:

- Experience firsthand how disruptions can impact daily life and business operations.
- Refine contingency and continuity plans.
- Test emergency protocols and identify areas for improvement.

[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

Facilitators can show the ESR video (scan QR code to access video) and explore ways in which their group/community can develop contingency responses in the event of disruptions.

- To increase Singaporeans' readiness in times of crises and disruptions, and instil a sense of confidence and optimism in Singapore's future, ESR will be held from 1 to 15 Feb 2026.
- Through this exercise, participating organisations can test out their contingency and business continuity plans. Individuals will also become more aware of potential disruptions and contingencies that will affect their daily lives and how they can respond.
- By being prepared for disruptions, we play our part to keep Singapore strong.



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Exercise SG Ready 2026

How can businesses and organisations play their part in Total Defence?

**Take part in ESR 2026
through self-facilitated TTX
packages to review
contingency plans**

TTX (Power Disruption)



TTX (Cybersecurity)



**Manage and mitigate
cyber risks**

Phishing Playbook



Cyber Resilience
Guide for Boards



**Review business
continuity plans**

EMA's guide on What to Do
During a Power Outage



IMDA's guide on What to
Do During a Power Outage



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Exercise SG Ready 2026

How can I support and put Total Defence into action in my daily life?

Plan for disruptions

- Disruptions to power and digital connectivity can happen anytime. Develop plans with your family and loved ones on what to do and be aware of those around you who may need help.
- Being mentally and practically prepared helps reduce uncertainty and impact.
- Familiarise yourself with what to do and pack a Ready Bag.



Prepare to respond

- During a major crisis or disruption, Singaporeans should refer to official media channels for accurate information, i.e., digital channels, TV broadcasts, or FM radio broadcasts. Official information and updates are also available at community nodes such as the community centres.
- Familiarise yourself with what to do and pack a Ready Bag.
- Equip yourself with life-saving skills such as basic first-aid and CPR skills.

Play your part

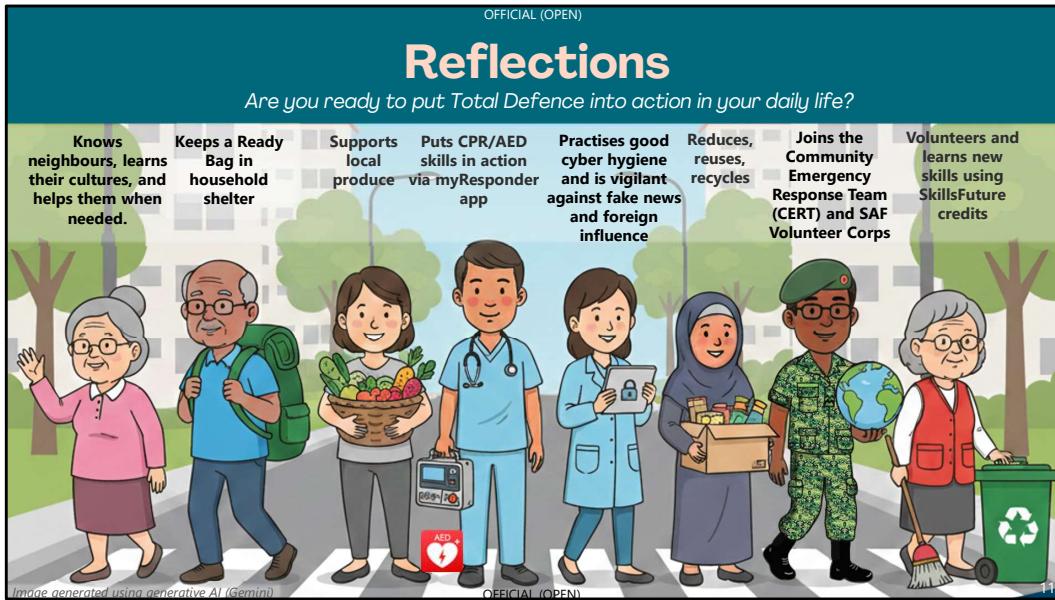
- Singapore stays strong when we stay united. Look out for one another, especially the vulnerable, and play your part in supporting your community during times of crisis.

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[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

Facilitators can contextualise the sharing and ask the participants for other suggestions on how they can play a role during ESR 2026.



[Commanders'/Facilitators' Sharing]:

- Commanders/Facilitators can refer to the actions listed in the slide and ask the audience, "How will they put TD into action in their daily lives?"

Additional source:

TD-in-Action

- <https://www.totaldefence.gov.sg/td-actions/>

Useful Resources

Access TD resources on SG101



<https://www.sg101.gov.sg/resources/total-defence/>



Learn more about TD on YouTube



<https://www.youtube.com/user/TotalDefenceSG>



Learn more about Exercise SG Ready



<https://go.gov.sg/exercisesgready>



Follow @wearetotaldefence



Watch the TD Day 2026 message

which will be made available at

<https://go.gov.sg/tdmessage2026>

on 1 Feb 2026!

Thank you!

Your feedback is valuable to us.

Please take a minute to share your feedback through the following link or QR code:



<https://go.gov.sg/feedback-tdp2026>

Follow @ConnexionSG for more NE content!

**[For Commanders'/Facilitators' Feedback]:**

- Commanders/Facilitators are requested to provide feedback on this engagement package to help Nexus improve resources to better support you.
- Please follow Nexus' social media pages for more National Education content.