



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SINGAPORE CRICKET CLUB PRESENTED \$300,000 CHEQUE DONATION TO SPORTCARES AT THE DISTINGUISHED VISITOR'S DINNER

SINGAPORE, 5 DEC – The Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) presented \$300,000 to SportCares – the philanthropic arm of Sport Singapore (SportSG) at the Singapore Cricket Club Distinguished Visitor's Dinner on 5 December 2019. The cheque presentation was witnessed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and received by Mr Lim Teck Yin, CEO, SportSG.

The charity fund-raising was conducted as part of the Club's commemorative activities for the Singapore Bicentennial, as the Club shares the same sports master plan vision that goes beyond winning medals, and focuses on creating more sporting opportunities and access, greater inclusivity and integration, as well as broader development of capabilities.

SportCares was adopted at the suggestion of PM, particularly in view of the ethos which both organisations share of engaging the community through sports, and leveraging sports experiences to make a positive societal difference.

"Social sports and sporting excellence have been at the heart of the Club across generations of its members and we are committed to continue this tradition. Through sports we connect with Singapore's and the international sporting fraternity," said SCC President Sher Baljit Singh. "We are privileged to have a gazetted heritage building as our clubhouse and what will soon be a national monument as our playing field - the field that we treat as our temple."

"The SCC represents the diversity of Singapore's society and we are indeed honoured that PM has agreed to be our Distinguished Visitor."

At the dinner, PM was conferred the title of "Distinguished Visitor"¹ upon his visit to the 167 years old club. The conferment of this title makes PM the Club's third Patron – a title which was first bestowed upon the then-Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew on 12 December 1970, and upon then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on 2 February 2007.

PM was also introduced to Stalwart club members from different generations of sporting excellence, who represented Singapore at different international sporting events. Among them was Shermeen Lim, a national lawn bowler for more than 10 years and Asian gold medallist. She more recently participated in the 2019 SEA Games in the Philippines along with 19 other SCC members.

Full text of SCC President Sher Baljit Singh's speech is appended to this press release.

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¹ The Visitor shall have a right of access to the President and Committee of the Club at any hour. He is welcome to state to the President his views on any aspect of the Club's management and affairs at all times. The Visitor is also enjoined to inspire the President – around matters of both domestic and of public weal – with the objective to ensure that the Singapore Cricket Club is an integral part of Singapore, cherishing the local traditions and standards.

About the Singapore Cricket Club (SCC)

Established in 1852, the Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) is the premier sports and lifestyle club in the heart of the city. The club is a gazetted building framed by a breathtaking blend of historic and modern buildings, with the iconic soon-to-be-gazetted Padang field at its doorstep. Across time, the SCC has been a magnet for Singapore's sporting fraternity.

The story of the Singapore Cricket Club is a fascinating microcosm of the story of Singapore itself. The club's transition from an elite, colonial sports club, to an open, multi-racial club playing a leading role in both the sporting and social life of the wider community, mirrors changes in the nation as a whole.

Here, just about every popular field game is played: from cricket, naturally, to soccer, hockey, rugby, tennis, lawn bowls, netball among others. To accommodate its ever-increasing number of sports enthusiasts, the SCC has leased another field in the Dempsey district. Across its two fields, the Club plays host to sports at all levels – from friendlies to interclub and national leagues, as well as international signature tournaments that bring in big name teams. The latter includes the SCC International Hockey 6s, the SCC International Rugby 7s, SCC Cricket Twenty20 and SCC International Soccer7s.

The camaraderie built on the field extends to the Clubhouse where wining, dining and socializing facilities cater to a diverse and distinctive community of members. The Club is reputed for its fine dining and local fare options, topped with impeccable and personalised service, all this in venues that have been refurbished with great care to retain its architectural splendour dating back to the 1850s.

The Club's packed calendar of events is reflective of its mix of members – celebrating Singapore's many festivals, commemorating milestone events and creating events that bring friends and families together.

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Full text of SCC President Mr. Sher Baljit Singh's speech:

Good evening Prime Minister Lee, Mrs Lee and esteemed guests.

Today marks a historic day for the Singapore Cricket Club. On behalf of its 7,500 members, let me thank you. The Distinguished Visitor board takes pride of place at the entrance of our clubhouse, immediately visible to members and guests. We were acutely aware it was awaiting your name, Prime Minister. But before we could invite you to grace our premises, we set about to polish and shine both our software and hardware to be ready to receive you. It is truly a privilege that you have so graciously accepted our invitation. A good leader leads from top, a great leader leads from within, and today you are with us.

I would also like to thank all members who are here tonight. You are stalwarts of the Club, contributing your time and efforts in making SCC a premier sporting club, in grooming young sporting talent, and in the organization of events and activities that bring members together. It's the passion and drive of members like yourselves that make the SCC still relevant today. We count on your continued support.

Mr Prime Minister, as the new Patron, allow me to give you a snapshot of the club.

Established in 1852, the SCC has transformed itself from an elite cricket-only sports club to a multi-sports, multi-racial, open-to-all Singapore club. Our members represent 51 different nationalities, with an even more diverse ethnic make-up. The more than 50 social events that we organise each year reflect our many cultures, celebrating Singapore and international festivals, from Hari Raya to Deepavali, and now, as you can see from our decor, the spirit of Christmas.

We have 114 reciprocal clubs in 28 countries and plan to have SCC chapters in different nations.

Members come for sports, for good food, to relax, to meet friends. The camaraderie is palpable, and for so many of us, it's the next best place to home.

We have 13 sporting sections, 14 if you count wine as a sport! In a normal year we participate in about 50 competitive league teams, organise 20 overseas tours and have about 80 overseas teams play at our club. Our members have flown the SCC and Singapore flag in places as far as Argentina, USA, Canada and all over Europe, Asia and Australia, and most recently at the SEA Games in the Philippines at which 19 members were part of the Singapore contingent. We organize four annual major tournaments that bring the finest athletes to the Padang to compete. We are of course grateful to the nation for giving us the Padang, which is hallowed ground to us.

To ensure membership rejuvenation we have a robust junior sports programme for juniors to join the club at a nominal \$30 dollars a month which can be offset when they are ready to purchase club membership at half the normal price. We make it a point to ensure that our junior sports members are involved in the decision-making process.

We are adding more non-skill sports like touch rugby / fressbie so we can have wider participation among members of all ages. We have ladies participating in all sports and will soon breach the final frontier of Soccer and Rugby with an all-ladies team in both.

We strive to not only do different things but do things differently. We have peeled and changed the layers in the club for efficiency and better financial stewardship. Work is in progress to digitise the back end and improve the service at front end. We are consciously reducing the use of paper, banning the use of plastic and planting more trees on our grounds.

The reason we are here today is because it has long been a tradition that the SCC must also benefit the whole of society. Sponsoring young talents at our sports academies and fund-raising for worthy initiatives have been our long-standing practices. Thus we chose to commemorate the Singapore Bicentennial our way, with a club-wide fund-raising purpose.

We want to thank you Sir for suggesting we support SportCares, an organization that shares our ethos that sports is for all, none barred.

A club is more than a building and more than the sum of its people. It is about spirit, about tradition, about pride.

As our Distinguished Visitor, we look forward to you Sir, for guidance and advice in making SCC a greater contributor to society.

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