

People take to Twitter to wish S R Nathan happy 90th birthday

The New Paper, 3 July 2014

Mr Nathan celebrated the occasion with a dinner party at the Shangri-La hotel.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said during a speech at the event: "He built up young, sometimes nascent organisations into mature institutions, for example NTUC, the SID, in the MFA, in the elected presidency. And he mentored promising young officers and helped them fulfill their potential, and I count myself a beneficiary.

"He helped Singapore to build and to grow into a modern, and prosperous, and stable nation."

His illustrious career

Starting out as a medical social worker, Mr Nathan's public service career spanned five decades, including as ambassador to the United States, director of the Defence Ministry's Security and Intelligence Division and permanent secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He was also the main negotiator with hijackers of the Laju passenger ferry in 1974 to secure the release of hostages.

In 1999, he was elected president and served two six-year terms

For his contribution, he was awarded the Order of Temasek (First Class), the highest civilian award, at last year's National Day Awards.

Mr Nathan also started the President's Challenge to help the less fortunate, which raised \$135 million over 13 years.

The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) timed the announcement of its first S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore, Mr Ho Kwon Ping, to coincide with the birthday.

The fellowship was set up to recognise the contributions of Singapore's sixth president.

Mr Ho, 61, executive chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings, will pursue research related to public policy and governance in Singapore and share his ideas in a series of public lectures, stated an IPS press release.

- See more at: <http://www.tnp.sg/news/people-take-twitter-wish-s-r-nathan-happy-90th-birthday#sthash.EuFu8ZbP.dpuf>