

Remarks by Mr Janadas Devan, IPS Director

Thank you Minister Chee,
Our 14th S R Nathan Fellow, Mr Tan Chong Meng,
Distinguished guests,

1. Welcome to the launch of *Exploring Global Trade in Singapore's Place as a World Connector*. It is a collection of the three lectures Mr Tan Chong Meng delivered as our 14th S R Nathan Fellow.
2. It is our great honour to have Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Finance, Mr Chee Hong Tat, launch Mr Tan's book.
3. Chong Meng delivered three lectures between March to May last year. He provided a thought-provoking exploration of the evolution of trade, the dynamics of maritime industry and Singapore's crucial role in global trade networks.
4. These lectures, as it so happened, came at a pivotal time just before the inauguration of President Donald Trump and the change in global trade and supply chain management upheavals, and brought unprecedented attention to supply chains and trade flows. In his lectures, Mr Tan traced the history of global exploration, setting the stage for the remarkable expansion of global trade. He also highlighted Singapore's strategic evolution as a global hub port and the foresight behind the developments in our maritime industry. I recommend especially the chapters detailing the history because a considerable foresight went into the development of our hub status.
5. Looking ahead, Mr Tan also addressed pressing challenges such as climate risks, technological disruptions, and geopolitical realities.
6. The S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore, named in honour of our 6th President, was established to foster in-depth exploration and understanding of issues critical to Singapore. Since its inception more than 10 years ago, the Fellowship has become a beacon of intellectual inquiry and discourse. It is through the generosity of our donors, along

with the Singapore government's matching grant, that we have been able to sustain and grow this initiative.

7. The Fellowship will continue to bring in distinguished leaders and thinkers. Professor Lily Kong, our 15th S R Nathan Fellow, has recently concluded her lecture series, *Universities Reinvented*. Her book will be expected to be launched later this year.
8. Our 16th S R Nathan Fellow will be Mr Philip Yeo, former Economic Development Board, A*STAR, and SPRING Singapore chairman. He will delve into the past, present and future of Singapore's economic development journey. His first lecture will be held next month, on 6 March.
9. We recently launched the new S R Nathan Fellowship Young Leaders Seminar Series. The first will take place later this month, on 24 February.
10. Ms Melissa Low, Research Fellow at NUS' Centre for Nature-based Climate Solutions, will be the first young leader to present her insights on shaping Singapore's climate future.
11. Last but not least, I would like to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Mr Tan Chong Meng for his outstanding contributions. We have had a string of civil servants from Peter Ho to Ravi Menon. We have had distinguished academics from the incomparable Professor Wong Guang Wu to Chan Heng Chee, historians also. We have had diplomats, Noeleen Heyzer, but I think Chong Meng was the first person who ran a huge organisation like PSA. And I think he brought something new to the lecture series , for which I am very grateful.