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**SPEECH BY DR TEO HO PIN, MAYOR OF NORTH
WEST DISTRICT AT THE LAUNCH OF NORTH WEST
GREEN FESTIVAL 2007 ON SATURDAY, 30 JUNE 2007
AT 1.00PM AT BUKIT PANJANG PLAZA, GARDEN
PLAZA**

Dr Yaacob Ibrahim,
Minister for the Environment and Water Resources

Mr Liang Eng Hwa,
Adviser to Zhenghua Grassroots Organisations

North West CDC Councillors

Grassroots Leaders

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good afternoon to all of you

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources for taking time off his busy schedule to launch the North West Green Festival 2007.

Background

2 **Caring for the environment in our neighbourhood is an integral part of the North West Community Development Council's mission to promote active citizenry.** North West CDC hopes to encourage residents to cultivate a green culture within the district and to spread the message that everyone has a part to play in protecting the environment and in conserving resources.

3 The North West CDC has been able to do so with the strong support of our community partners like the Grassroots Organisations, National Environment Agency, Restroom Association (Singapore), Singapore Environment Council, Town Councils, National Library Board and Green Clubs in the North West District.

Milestones in FY 2006

4 Back in 2003, the North West CDC launched a three-tier Green Plan, in line with Singapore Green 2012. Its focus was to promote green initiatives in Schools, in the Community and at the National level.

5 We have been actively engaging schools to set up Green Clubs and organise green activities both for the students and community under our Green @ School programme. To date, we have some 40 Green Clubs with over 1,000 members. Some of our primary school Green Club members are here today to

share with us their project and knowledge on energy conservation. Do look out for our Green Ambassadors when you visit the exhibition booths and gain some green tips from them.

6 Under our Green @ Community; and National programmes, we have implemented more than 13 environmental programmes, reaching out to more than 20,000 participants. I would like to cite two examples here. The launch of our Holland-Bukit Panjang Town Recycling Day last December saw more than 4,500 residents participating in this major town recycling event. Our water conservation programme at Nee Soon East, Canberra, Sembawang and Marsiling for the past one year saw more than 5,000 households being educated on water conservation tips, through house visits conducted by Grassroots Leaders and student volunteers.

North West Green Festival

7 Today you will witness the launch of the inaugural North West Green Festival, which will carry through the whole month of July.

8 By consolidating all green efforts within the North West District, North West CDC hopes that the North West Green Festival would create greater awareness on environmental issues, promote the practice of GREEN habits and cultivate a GREEN culture amongst the residents in the North West District.

9 In collaboration with various partners, North West CDC has come up with a variety of green initiatives for this month-long campaign, to raise awareness amongst the residents. This year, the North West Green Festival will focus on three areas, namely Energy Conservation, Public Health and Nature Appreciation.

Energy Conservation

10 The need for Energy Conservation is increasingly pressing as Climate Change continues to threaten the environment we live in.

11 In the recent speech by Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, at the 6th International Institute of Strategic Studies' Asia Security Conference, he touched on the major environmental challenge the world is facing today - global climate change. The consequences are extreme weather events, more frequent and severe natural disasters such as major floods and droughts, rising sea levels, retreating glaciers, longer and hotter summers.

12 Government around the world are beginning to take climate change seriously and are exploring possible frameworks for countries to cooperate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

13 We can start at home and do our part as a small nation. By setting your air-conditioner at 25°C, we can **reduce** 470kg of carbon dioxide and save \$170 per year without compromising on cooling comfort.

14 NEA had recently launched the mandatory labelling of air conditioners and refrigerators. We can do our part in energy conservation by choosing such energy efficient appliances.

15 North West CDC has lined up a series of events and activities for the residents and students in the North West District on Energy Conservation. Apart from this 2-day roadshow, we will also be bringing roving skits on climate change to schools in the district to enhance students' awareness on the effect of climate change; and to educate the youths on energy saving tips to reduce energy consumption. A contest on energy saving will also be introduced to encourage the students to save energy as a family unit.

16 We will also be piloting an Energy Audit Programme “Make the SWITCH” for residents in Canberra Division. 100 students from National Junior College together with Grassroots Leaders from Canberra Division will conduct house visits to share with more than 7,000 households on energy saving tips to cut down their electricity bills.

Public Health

17 Under our second focus area, Public Health, North West CDC will carry out three programmes – Lead Everyone Against Dengue Programme, Happy Toilets @ North West and Swat Litter Bugs!

18 Dengue cases are on the rise. The situation has reached epidemic level with weekly cases hitting 400 two weeks ago. This is a worrying trend that needs to be curbed immediately. Although there are multiple “non-controllable” factors like the hot weather and unusual intermittent rain and the

change in the virus strain, we believe that with collective effort of the Community, we can keep dengue at bay.

19 The North West CDC, together with NEA, Grassroots Organisations and schools, have stepped up our anti-dengue efforts by introducing the Lead Everyone Against Dengue (LEAD) Programme. In this programme, about 2,000 volunteers will conduct house visits and share dengue tips to more than 91,000 households in the next 2 months. The efforts of our volunteers will only be effective and sustainable with the cooperation of all the residents. Only with the combined efforts of everyone, can we win the fight against dengue.

20 Environment and Health are closely related. A clean and healthy environment will improve the health of individuals. Together with the Restroom Association (Singapore), we will roll out the Happy Toilets School Education Programme in all PCF centres in North West District.

21 “Swat Litter Bugs”, another initiative, will further emphasise the importance of anti-littering and to keep a clean environment. More than 1,000 students have pledged to undertake the clean up of the estate and spread anti-littering messages to residents in our District.

Nature Appreciation

22 We are organising a series of natural walks for our residents and students under the third focus area, Nature Appreciation.

23 Nature Trail @ Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and Green Adventure @ Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve are among the many which will be organised in the month of July. I hope that through these walks, all of us can learn to love and protect our environment more.

CONCLUSION

24 Throughout this month-long green festival, we expected 100,000 students and residents will gain useful tips and

information like energy conservation, how to keep the environment clean and bringing up the standard of public health from this festival. Do look out for the green activities we have lined up for you this green month and we hope that you could put the tips learnt into practice.

25 On behalf of the North West CDC, I wish to thank all community partners and stakeholders for your strong support for the North West Green Festival.

Thank you.
