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BCA Signs MOU with Andhra Pradesh, Spurring Business Opportunities for Local Firms

During a recent trip to the southern state of Andhra Pradesh in India, BCA CEO Mr Hugh Lim signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Andhra Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority (APRERA).

Witnessed by Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development, the MOU will help Andhra Pradesh build its institutional capacity to enable a vibrant and productive real estate and built environment industry.
Mr Hugh Lim, BCA CEO, signed the MOU with APRERA witnessed by Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr Chandrababu Naidu and 2M Desmond Lee on 26 June 2018.

APRERA is the authority overseeing the orderly development of the real estate sector, especially residential properties, in Andhra Pradesh.

Mr Lim said: “Our collaboration with APRERA is an important step in sharing knowledge and deepening our engagement with India. We will continue to develop this strong partnership to help them address areas of need and introduce Singapore firms that can contribute towards the development in Andhra Pradesh. With APRERA driving quality and on-time delivery of real estate projects in Andhra Pradesh, Singapore firms will be able to value-add to these efforts as they have built up expertise and experience in these knowledge areas. This is also in line with our Construction Industry Transformation Map to assist local firms to venture overseas.”

BCA has been conducting briefings and workshops for Singapore companies interested in business opportunities in Andhra Pradesh. Around 30 companies — including contractors, consultants, material suppliers, IT firms, and trading and investment firms — joined the BCA delegation on the trip to Andhra Pradesh.

Construction companies like Tiong Seng and CKR are currently in talks with developers there to provide precast solutions, while One Singapore Town — a consortium of A. Alliance Architect, Pacific Prince Investment and Eyota Engineering — is in the advanced stage of finalising a textile park design and construction project worth S$60m.
Mr Pek Lian Guan, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Tiong Seng Holdings Limited, said: “There are ample opportunities in Andhra Pradesh for Singapore enterprises at this phase of city building. Our Indian counterparts can leverage Singapore’s expertise and experience in building not just the city infrastructure or ‘hardware’ but also in growing the soft elements of nurturing and gathering of human capital from all over the world.”

Singapore has been involved in helping Andhra Pradesh build its capital city Amaravati since 2014, under the MOU signed between the Infrastructure Corporation of Andhra Pradesh and Enterprise Singapore in December 2014 for Amaravati Masterplans development. In May 2017, a subsequent MOU signed between the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Ministry of Trade and Industry provides for greater cooperation in economic and institutional development of Andhra Pradesh. The MOU signed on 26 June is a follow-up to the MOU signed in May 2017.

Celebrating Knowledge @ South East

In support of the first-ever SkillsFuture Festival, South East CDC and SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) collaborated with 15 government agencies and organisations to reach out to residents through booth activities and workshops to help residents understand government policies and advise them on how to upgrade their skills.

Celebrating Knowledge @ South East took place on 21 July this year as part of the month-long SkillsFuture Festival. It served as an excellent opportunity for residents in the South East district to learn about what courses were available, what it means to experience a SMART Living Home, and even how to convert from analogue TV to digital!

MSO’s OneService team was proud to be a part of this inaugural movement. We reached out to residents about how they could use the OneService App and Portal to give feedback on municipal matters in their neighbourhoods, and how they could contribute to a better living environment through their everyday actions.

The OneService workshop was also well-received. Attendees were guided step-by-step on how to use the OneService Portal to find out about municipal schedules in their neighbourhoods, such as block washing, bin chute flushing and hawker centre closures. They learned to access the services directory to find amenities in their neighbourhoods and explore the list of community events on the Portal, so that they could be updated on the latest happenings around them. Attendees also showed keen interest in using the case reporting functions of the OneService App.
Participants championing issues close to their heart with photo props.
Advisers from South East District and participants at the launch ceremony.

The OneService Team conducting workshops to educate residents
Embracing Our Cultural Heritage

Pulau Ubin and the Singapore Botanic Gardens have long occupied special places in Singaporean hearts and history. This June, more people had the opportunity to discover and experience important cultural aspects of these sites through Ubin Day and the Singapore Botanic Gardens Heritage Festival.

Celebrating Pulau Ubin’s Various Facets

First held in 2002, Ubin Day celebrates different facets of the island. Ubin Day is part of Pesta Ubin, a month-long festival organised by the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN) and the community. More than 3,500 participants took part in over 50 activities on the island during Pesta Ubin.

Held on 24 June this year, the seventh edition of Ubin Day saw a myriad of activities organised by the community in collaboration with the National Parks Board (NParks), including kampong games, art workshops, visits to kampong houses, and a talk about an archaeological dig on Pulau Ubin. Community groups set up educational booths to promote biodiversity conservation, cultural heritage, and various ground-up initiatives. The Photographic Society of Singapore and NParks also collaborated on a photography exhibition titled “The Island in Focus”, which captured unique aspects of Pulau Ubin.
Apart from the festivities, guest-of-honour Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Trade and Industry, and Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development, unveiled improved facilities at the Ubin Living Lab. The Ubin Living Lab is an integrated facility for field studies, environmental education, and community outreach.

NParks has created a new working space at the Ubin Living Lab where the community can do restoration work onsite. Other enhancements that have been added include toilets and showers, to make it more conducive for students and researchers to stay over at Ubin for research and educational activities. Minister Chan and Minister Lee also joined the community in planting over 100 coastal trees at the Ubin Living Lab.

Missed Ubin Day and curious about what Pulau Ubin has to offer? Check out [www.nparks.gov.sg/pulau-ubin](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/pulau-ubin) to learn more about the island and to sign up for activities organised by NParks on the island.

**Exploring Southeast Asian Heritage at the Singapore Botanic Gardens**
The annual Singapore Botanic Gardens Heritage Festival took place from 30 June to 8 July this year. On top of celebrating the Gardens’ rich heritage, the Festival featured some of the plants used by the indigenous cultures of Southeast Asia, including those in Singapore. Over two weekends, visitors enjoyed a wide range of fun-filled activities and programmes, including a carnival with stalls selling plants, games and food, free concerts and movie screenings at the Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage, and educational tours around the Gardens.

The Festival kicked off with the opening of the new Ethnobotany Garden on 30 June. This approximately one-hectare themed garden is the first of its kind in Singapore, where visitors can learn more about the plants used by the indigenous cultures of Southeast Asia.

The Ethnobotany Garden is in the Gardens’ Bukit Timah Core, and is located at an area historically known as the Economic Garden. Featuring plants native to Southeast Asia that have traditional uses, this is the largest such collection in Southeast Asia. Various artefacts that reflect different aspects of indigenous living are also displayed throughout the garden.

The Ethnobotany Garden features Southeast Asian plants with traditional uses as well as artefacts.

The garden includes a two-storey Centre for Ethnobotany which houses an interpretive exhibition of artefacts, interactive displays, and informational panels that further highlight the roles plants have played in shaping the world we know today.
With the Ethnobotany Garden, the public can better understand the Gardens’ important historical role in introducing and promoting many plants of economic value to the region, and learn more about how early settlers made use of plants in their local cultures and daily lives.

If you are keen to learn more about these plants our predecessors used, come on down! The Ethnobotany Garden is open from 5am to 12 midnight daily, while the Centre for Ethnobotany is open from 9am to 6pm daily except for the last Wednesday of the month.

Fighting Illegal Wildlife Trade

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) has been working closely with local and international partners to act on illegal wildlife trade and smuggling into or through Singapore. On 5 March this year, AVA and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore (ICA) seized a container of illegal elephant ivory which weighed about 3.5 tonnes. The shipment, declared to contain groundnuts, originated from Nigeria and was to be re-exported to Vietnam.

This was the second largest haul of illegal elephant ivory in Singapore in a decade. For this amount of ivory, at least 850 elephants would have been poached and killed. According to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), more African elephants are being killed for ivory today than are being born. Approximately 60% of elephants die at the hands of poachers.
Steps to Take Elephant Poachers to Task

AVA’s work did not end with the seizure of the ivory. To tackle the problem upstream, it is important to identify hotspots for poaching and illegal ivory trade. To do this, AVA collaborated with leading conservation biologist Dr Samuel K Wasser and his team from the University of Washington, as well as with officers from the US Homeland Security Investigations, to conduct DNA analysis of samples from this seizure.

Dr Wasser first developed technology to extract DNA from faeces, which allowed him to map elephant genes across Africa. Following that, in 1998, he successfully extracted DNA from ivory and could now compare it against the genetic map plotted earlier. In an interview with the New York Times in 2016, Dr Wasser stated that these DNA tests are so accurate that he could “take a tusk from anywhere in Africa and trace its origins to within 300km of where that elephant was killed, often to the very park or reserve.”
Such information has enabled conservationists to find out where syndicates operate, and sometimes stop the crimes from happening. Back in 2005, Dr Wasser was in Singapore to extract ivory samples for DNA testing. That ivory came from a shipment seized here in 2002. Using Dr Wasser’s method, results showed that the ivory had come solely from elephants that lived in Zambia. That information helped Zambian police to focus on poachers and traders in the area, facilitating their enforcement and preventive work.

Scan the QR code to view a video of the ivory sampling process.

Leveraging Technology for Better HDB Homes

To advance its goal of creating smart and sustainable homes for Singaporeans, the Housing & Development Board (HDB) signed three research agreements with industry partners at the World Cities Summit on 10 July 2018. These pioneering research projects will pave the way for the creation of a smart energy town, the optimisation of construction efficiency, and expanded solar capabilities.
HDB signed three research agreements with industry partners at the World Cities Summit.

**Tengah: The Smart Energy Town**

Tengah, announced in 2016 as HDB’s newest town, is envisioned to be Singapore’s first and largest smart and sustainable town. To realise this vision, HDB is collaborating with SP Group to develop and test-bed a centralised energy software system that will collect, process, and analyse data about energy consumption patterns at the town, neighbourhood, and apartment levels.

Dubbed the “Smart Energy Concierge” and powered by artificial intelligence, the system will be connected to the energy grid, energy storage systems, and solar photovoltaic generators. It will be programmed to identify patterns and anomalies in energy flows to minimise disruption to services, channel energy more efficiently to optimise energy use, and promote greater energy conservation.

**3D Concrete Printing**

Meanwhile, HDB is partnering with Robin Village Development Pte Ltd, Witteveen+Bos South East Asia Pte Ltd, and Nanyang Technological University to explore the adoption of 3D concrete printing for cheaper and faster production of unique architectural forms and components.

The process of creating customised mould sets for concrete building elements currently takes up to two months. The collaboration will look into developing digital
fabrication technologies through the creation of a 3D concrete printer, with the aim of increasing construction productivity, reducing production costs, and expanding design capabilities for HDB developments.

**Expanding Solar Capabilities in the Open Sea**

Due to land constraints in Singapore, there is a limit to the amount of renewable energy that can be harvested from solar panels installed on land. One possible solution is to deploy solar panels on water bodies as floating solar farms.

To accelerate solar adoption in Singapore, HDB is collaborating with ISO Landscape Pte Ltd to study the deployment of solar panels built on HDB’s own award-winning floating modular system in open sea conditions. With fewer obstructions in the sea, the solar panels can potentially receive the maximum sunlight available.

This is the first time a locally-designed flotation system is being deployed for solar panels. The research project will study how to overcome the challenges of harsh marine conditions such as strong winds, wave action, and the accumulation of marine organisms.

These three research projects are in line with HDB’s continuous efforts to harness technology to develop practical solutions to enhance the liveability of HDB estates and support sustainable development in Singapore.

**President*s Design Award Recipients Create Impact with Innovative Designs**

President*s Design Award (P*DA) 2018 recognised two Designers of the Year and nine Designs of the Year in July this year. Jointly handed out by the DesignSingapore Council (Dsg) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), it is Singapore’s highest accolade for design.

The Designers of the Year are Angelene Chan, Chief Executive Officer of DP Architects, for her work in architecture; and Hans Tan, Founder of Hans Tan Studio, for his work in product and industrial design. Both winners were chosen for their outstanding design philosophies, innovation, originality, and leadership in their respective design disciplines.

In addition, the portfolios of the two designers include works that have had an impact on contemporary life and the living environment, social and national significance, and iconic value.
Angelene Chan, Chief Executive Officer of DP Architects and P*DA Designer of the Year 2018.
Designs of the Year

Four of the Designs of the Year are architectural projects:

- **Mediacorp Campus** by Maki & Associates and DP Architects Pte Ltd;
- **Oasia Hotel Downtown** by WOHA Architects Pte Ltd;
- **China Fuzhou Jin Niu Shan Trans-urban Connector (Fudao 福道)** by LOOK Architects Pte Ltd; and
- **The Tembusu** by ARC Studio Architecture + Urbanism Pte Ltd.
The Oasia Hotel Downtown by WOHA Architects Pte Ltd reinvents the typology of mixed-use towers in the city by introducing creeping plants over the building skin.
The China Fuzhou Jin Niu Shan Trans-urban Connector (Fudao 福道) by LOOK Architects Pte Ltd stretches 19km and activates a once inaccessible part of the city.

The other Designs of the Year are:

- **Changi Airport Terminal 4** by Changi Airport Group;
- **The Future of Us Pavilion** by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD);
- **The Warehouse Hotel** by Asylum Creative Pte Ltd;
- **weatherHYDE** by billionBricks; and
- **Who Cares? Transforming the Caregiving Experience in Singapore** by fuelfor and the National Council of Social Service.
The Future of Us Pavilion by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) was created using the parametric and algorithmic approach, pushing the boundaries of design, fabrication, and construction methods.

The recipients come from diverse fields: visual communication, product and industrial design, interior design, experience and service design, engineering design, design strategy, and architecture. As part of a revamp after a decade, the P*DA now places greater emphasis on outcome-based design impact, in addition to its longstanding criterion of excellence in design craftsmanship.

The winners were selected by the P*DA’s first-ever multi-disciplinary jury panel, made up of local and international leaders in design, business, and architecture.


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Transformation of the Real Estate Industry: Your Questions Answered!
The Real Estate Industry Transformation Map was launched to provide the real estate industry with a roadmap to become future-ready.

What is the Industry Transformation Map for the real estate industry?

The Real Estate Industry Transformation Map (ITM), launched in February 2018, provides the real estate industry with a roadmap to become future-ready and stay relevant to its customers. The ITM focuses on two areas: property transaction services and facilities management.

For property transaction services, the Real Estate ITM aims to help the real estate agency industry embrace and incorporate technology to meet the changing needs of consumers, making property transactions more seamless for them.

What new property transaction-related initiatives can consumers look forward to in the near future?

A cross-industry and inter-government agency workgroup led by the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) is spearheading the shift towards seamless, end-to-end, efficient, and secure property transactions for consumers.

The workgroup is developing digitised, standardised contract templates for consumers and agents to use. It is also working on making it easier for the industry to access government property-related data – such as property ownership and validity of passes for foreign tenants – to enable firms to conduct automated due
diligence and compliance checks to give consumers greater assurance.

CEA is also working with the industry to publish data on property transactions closed by agents, starting with HDB residential transactions from the end of this year.

In the longer term, CEA plans to work with the industry to collect and publish consumer ratings of agents. In fact, some property agencies in Singapore already feature consumer ratings of property agents on their websites! These ratings increase transparency and bolster consumer confidence when engaging real estate agents, allowing consumers to make their arrangements with greater peace of mind.

**What can consumers do to protect themselves?**

While the above-mentioned initiatives are works in progress, consumers can still play an active role in ensuring that their property transactions are smooth and efficient by starting their relationship right with their property agents. Consumers can:

1. Verify the legitimacy of property agents by checking their details on CEA’s Public Register;
2. Negotiate and agree on the commission rate of the agent before he or she starts working on the property transaction; and
3. Put the agreed details down in black and white using CEA’s Prescribed Estate Agency Agreements.


*This piece was edited from the 99.co article published on 14 March 2018.*

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