

Home Team Connects

Connecting You with the Home Team

An initiative by the Home Team Volunteer Network



EDITOR'S PICK

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (COS) DEBATE 2023



At the COS Debate in Parliament on 27 February, 2MIN Josephine Teo, MOS Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim and MOS Sun Xueling shared the key initiatives and efforts by the Home Team to keep Singapore safe and secure.

Here's a brief summary of the new measures that the Home Team will implement.

Speech by 2MIN Josephine Teo

>> [Read the Speech](#)

MHA COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY DEBATE 2023

Playing Our Part to Keep Singapore Safe and Secure

We are committed to keep Singapore and our online space safe and secure. We will continue to update our laws and enhance our capabilities to respond to a dynamic and constantly changing operating environment.

WHAT'S NEW:

- ✔ Introduce the **Online Criminal Harms Act** to better protect our people and strengthen the Government's ability to deal with online criminal activities. It builds on our current laws by:
 - Expanding the scope of regulatory levers that we can apply to online criminal activities.
 - Increasing the scope of entities we can act against.
 - Introducing levers that deal more effectively with the nature of the online criminal harms.



Tackling Terrorism, Combatting Drugs and Enhancing Rehabilitation

To prevent youth radicalisation, we work closely with stakeholders and have structures and processes in place to fight terrorism.

We will continue to strengthen our harm prevention approach to combat drug abuse, and work in partnership with the community to keep Singapore drug-free, and reduce long-term recidivism.

WHAT'S NEW:

- ✓ Deployment of **Saliva Test Kits** at Checkpoints from January this year to aid CNB officers to identify potential drug abusers. From February this year, Saliva Test Kits are also deployed at Police's roadblock operations.
- ✓ Launch the **Yellow Ribbon Sandbox** initiative where industry partners and employers hire releasing inmates, and provide on-the-job training or work-study programmes after they start work.
- ✓ Pilot new scheme for volunteers to provide pro-social support and assist supervisees emplaced on Community-Based Programmes.



Speech by MOS Sun Xueling

Combatting Scams and Safeguarding Singapore, Together

We continue to work with partners across the Whole-of-Government, private sector, and community to combat scams.

We will enhance efforts to educate the public about scams to empower them to take action against scams.

We launched a national **anti-scam campaign** in January with the tagline 'I can ACT against scams' to mobilise every citizen to take action against scams.

WHAT'S NEW:

- ✓ Launch of **Scam Public Education Office** to drive our collective efforts with community partners in the war on scams.
- ✓ Amend the **Corruption, Drug Trafficking and Other Serious Crimes (Confiscation of Benefits) Act** to prescribe specific conduct which can hold money mules criminally liable.



WELCOME HOME, SCDF HEROES!



The **Operation Lionheart (OLH) contingent returned home on 18 February** to a hero's welcome after a two-week mission in Türkiye to assist in search and rescue efforts for earthquake survivors.

The SCDF officers were received by MIN K Shanmugam, MOS Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim and Turkish Ambassador to Singapore His Excellency Mehmet Burçin Gönenli. **MIN commended the officers for their dedication and thanked the officers' families for their support.**

MIN Shanmugam also visited the four SCDF search canines which had to be quarantined at the Animal and Veterinary Service (AVS) Animal Quarantine Centre (AQC).

The **SCDF search specialists shared with MIN their deployment experience in Türkiye, and the routine on caring for the canines' sanitation, hygiene and health, e.g. thermal clothing to protect the doggies from the cold weather.**

The dogs will be quarantined for 30 days upon their return as per AVS' guidelines to ensure they do not carry diseases into Singapore.



>> [Watch MIN's doorstep](#)

>> [Check out MOS' Facebook post and more pics here](#)

>> [More on MIN's visit](#)

>> [Some fun facts of the canines](#)



First Reading of the Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Bill and the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore (Amendment) Bill

1. The two bills propose these main amendments:

- a. Introduce a new legislative framework to control substances based on their capacity to produce a psychoactive effect, rather than on their chemical structure; and
- b. Increase the penalties for offenders who possess large quantities of controlled drugs that are deemed to be more dangerous and harmful.

>> [Read the press release](#)

Amendments to Misuse of Drugs Act
The Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Bill will

- A. Introduce a new legislative framework for psychoactive substances.
- B. Increase the punishment for possession of large quantities of more dangerous and harmful controlled drugs.

A. New Legislative Framework for Psychoactive Substances

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) mimic the effects of controlled drugs such as cannabis and heroin.
Examples of NPS include synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones.

Significant increase in number of NPS reported globally

Significant increase in number of NPS abusers arrested in Singapore

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

A. New Legislative Framework for Psychoactive Substances

To strengthen deterrence against psychoactive substances, the amendments will:

- Introduce a new framework to control substances based on their capacity to produce a psychoactive effect, instead of their chemical structure, unless excluded in a specified Schedule.
- Criminalise the trafficking, manufacturing, importing, exporting, possession and consumption of psychoactive substances, and allow for the arrest and detention of abusers for treatment and rehabilitation.

B. Increased punishment for possession of large quantities of controlled drugs deemed to be more dangerous and harmful

The current sentencing framework for drug possession does not sufficiently account for the potential harm that could be caused by persons with large amounts of controlled drugs in their possession.

A more deterrent punishment is necessary to deter the proliferation of drugs locally.
Increased punishments, including caning, will be introduced for the possession of selected controlled drugs above certain weight thresholds.

ISSUANCE OF ORDERS UNDER THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT AGAINST TWO SELF-RADICALISED SINGAPOREAN YOUTHS

An MHA press release was issued on 21 Feb 2023, providing updates on two cases under the Internal Security Act (ISA). Please refer to [Annex A](#) for the full press release.

2. Two self-radicalised Singaporean youths, both students aged 15 and 16, were issued with an Order of Detention (OD) and Restriction Order (RO) under the Internal Security Act (ISA) in Dec 2022 and Jan 2023 respectively.

Brief Facts of Cases

Detention of Self-Radicalised Singaporean Youth

3. The 15-year-old male Singaporean was **self-radicalised by online terrorist propaganda**, and supportive of Al Qaeda (AQ) and Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). He came across extremist content online in early 2022 and by mid-2022, he was deeply radicalised.

4. The said youth shared pro-ISIS materials on his social media accounts and made online postings expressing his support for AQ. He also **shared violent videos with his classmates** in an attempt to radicalise them. However, none of his classmates expressed interest in these extremist materials.

5. The youth had **considered conducting attacks in Singapore**, including knife attacks in popular tourist areas in Singapore and being a suicide bomber, but had yet to undertake steps towards actualising his attack ideations.

6. He is the **youngest individual to-date dealt with under the ISA** for terrorism-related activities.

Issuance of Restriction Order against Self-Radicalised Singaporean Youth

7. The 16-year-old male Singaporean was self-radicalised by online ISIS propaganda, and believed in the use of armed violence to establish an Islamic caliphate. He was earlier cautioned by ISD to steer clear of extremist content online after he had **an interest in far-right extremist content** and ISIS extremist content.

8. Despite being warned, the youth **continued to imbibe ISIS propaganda** and **engaged in ISIS-related discussions with other social media users**. The youth propagated his support for ISIS by **creating and uploading three ISIS propaganda videos onto social media**.

Sharing of Radical Beliefs & Security Protocols Among the Three Youths

9. The two aforementioned youths were also online contacts of the 18-year-old Singaporean youth who was detained under the ISA in Dec 2022 (refer to MHA's press release dated 1 Feb 2023 at [Annex B](#)). While the three youths were self-radicalised separately, they became acquainted with one another through the same extremist social media channel that they were in and **shared their radical views and support for terrorist groups such as the ISIS with one another** on social media.

Key Points of Communication

10. The cases above show that:

- The **terrorism threat to Singapore remains high**. The **spread of radical and extremist ideologies online has fuelled the self-radicalisation threat** in Singapore.
- The Internet and social media platforms have featured prominently in the cases. While social media and online gaming platforms are themselves innocuous,

the features on such platforms are being increasingly co-opted by terrorists and extremists for recruitment and radicalisation.

- **Public vigilance and preparedness are key components of our defence against terrorism.** Time is of the essence when someone displays signs of radicalisation. Often, **family, friends and colleagues are in the best position to spot the signs of radicalisation.**
 - The public, especially youths, should stay vigilant and be discerning in the consumption of information on social media, to avoid falling prey to the influence of divisive, extremist, or violent material online.
 - Visit the SGSecure website to learn the signs of radicalisation: <https://go.gov.sg/sgsecure-detect-signs-of-radicalisation>
- **Early reporting** can save lives by helping the individual receive **timely guidance, and counselling.** ISD adopts a comprehensive and holistic approach in the rehabilitation of the detainees and RO supervisees, comprising **religious, psychological and social rehabilitation.**
- Anyone who knows or suspects that a person is radicalised should **promptly contact the ISD Counter-Terrorism hotline 1800-2626-273 or report via the SGSecure app.**

11. We have included the links to the full press releases on the cases below. Please feel free to share them with your networks, or cross-share on your respective social media channels. We would appreciate it if you can **continue encouraging your networks to join us as [SGSecure Responders](#).** By Staying Alert, Staying United, and Staying Strong, we can help keep Singapore safe and secure.

12. Thank you.

>> [Annex A – MHA press release dated 21 Feb 2023](#)

>> [Annex B – MHA press release dated 1 Feb 2023](#)

WHAT MIN REALLY THINKS

Is MIN K Shanmugam “too fierce”? What would he be if he weren’t a lawyer and politician? In his interview with Our Grandfather Story, MIN answered these questions and shared his thoughts on issues like the death penalty and s377a.



On cancel culture, MIN said people should be able to speak what they think without fear of being lynched virtually. But flawed arguments have to be exposed, or the public will suffer.

>> [Watch the video!](#)

THANK YOU, ANTI-DRUG PARTNERS



About 100 community partners from the Anti-Drug Abuse Advocate (A3) Network, United Against Drugs Coalition, and DrugFreeSG Light-Up partners attended the annual A3 Network Appreciation Lunch on 28 January.

Delegates from the Hong Kong Narcotics Bureau also attended and shared about the mentoring programme they are undergoing hosted by CNB.

Guest-of-Honour MOS Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim acknowledged the attendees’ contributions in anti-drug advocacy efforts, and highlighted the continued challenging drug situation as drug syndicates are ever eager to supply drugs to Singapore and have shown an increased willingness to deal in large quantities of drugs in a single movement.



“[Drug syndicates] are continuously innovating and thinking of how to circumvent the law, bringing ruin to lives and families for their own profit. These challenges reinforce the need for us as a community to remain vigilant, and not become complacent about Singapore’s drug situation.” - MOS Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim

[>>> Read MOS’ Speech](#)

VSC HONOURS VOLUNTEERS



SPF’s Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC) honoured the contributions of its volunteers at an appreciation dinner on 10 February with MOS Sun Xueling as the Guest-of-Honour.

At the appreciation dinner, **MOS Sun launched an e-book commemorating VSC’s history and presented awards to**



recognise officers and volunteers for their hard work.

Formed after World War Two to supplement the lean colonial force tasked to police an island ravaged by the Japanese invaders, the VSC has grown with the addition of a new scheme, VSC (Community) or VSC(C), in 2018. VSC(C) volunteers are unarmed and identifiable by their blue polo T-shirts.

[>>> Read MOS Sun’s Facebook post](#)

SECURING THE RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

SPF can now reach out to a wider group of retailers, including those located within the heartlands, with the onboarding of Singapore Retailers Association and Federation of Merchants’ Association, Singapore to the Retailer Industry Safety and Security Watch Group (iSSWG).



The iSSWG scheme is an important **platform for the Home Team to work closely with industry stakeholders to address industry-specific safety and security concerns, and to co-create effective measures to counter the threats posed by crime and terrorism.**

At the announcement of the Retailer

iSSWG’s expansion on 17 February, MOS Sun Xueling presented Outstanding Community Partnership Awards to 37 stakeholders for their proactiveness in reducing the overall crime rate within their communities.

[>>> Read the press release](#)

[>>> Read MOS’ speech](#)

STEPPING UP THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS

On 13 February, MHA and MFA held a **reception in New York to profile Singapore’s candidature to the Commission on Narcotics Drugs (CND) for the term 2024 to 2027.**




This is Singapore's first CND membership bid, stepping up from being an observer since 1997 to a full-fledged CND member. Nearly 40 officials from 24 foreign missions to the United Nations attended the reception.

In his address, MOS Faishal shared Singapore's contributions to the CND and our priorities, which included promoting greater dialogue and cooperation, contributing to capacity building and advocating for a greater focus on rehabilitation for drug offenders. MOS Faishal, PS Pang Kin Keong and members of the delegation also held side-line engagements with ambassadors and representatives from various foreign missions to lobby for our candidature.

>> [Read MOS' speech](#)


>> [More details in MOS Facebook post](#)



FIGHTING THE GLOBAL DRUG WAR TOGETHER



The global drug problem continues to pose challenges and Singapore hopes to forge stronger international partnerships to counter the impact of drugs on societies.

by Elaine Lee



What really happens during a drug raid? Join us as we tagged along a team of CNB officers on an operation against drug abusers.

By Joash Tan



HTVN CALENDAR

As we usher in the new year, HTVN started an e-calendar series featuring our various volunteer schemes for each month! 🎉

>> [Download the HTVN e-Calendar here](#)



FEBRUARY 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08	09	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				





Readiness in Crisis & Disruption

Together, we keep Singapore strong

ENSURING OUR SURVIVAL

“Staying united is key to Singapore's survival - it is the only way to deal with challenges in an increasingly troubled world. We must look to our Total Defence, and maintain a strong and credible SAF and Home Team. We must also brace ourselves and be psychologically prepared that in the next decades our region may not be as peaceful and stable as it has been thus far.”

- PM Lee Hsien Loong, National Day Message 8 August 2022



WHY TOTAL DEFENCE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Challenging Global Environment



1. Increasing Geopolitical Tensions

The world has become increasingly troubled. The rise in contestations among countries have resulted in loss of sovereignty for some and increased tensions and uncertainties for all.



2. Emerging Hybrid Threats

There has been an emergence of hybrid threats such as disinformation, fake news, hostile information campaigns, cyberattacks that threaten to sow discord and destabilise our peace and harmony.



3. Rising Inflation, Disrupted Food Supply

Regional and international tensions have affected economic conditions. Singapore faces rising inflation and disrupted food supply, which affect the livelihoods of Singaporeans.



4. Prevalence of Terror Threat, Self-radicalisation

Singapore is not spared from the prevalence of terrorist and extremist ideologies online, including those propagated by foreign preachers and ideologues. The terrorism threat remains high.

What Home Team Officers Should Know and Do



1. National Interest First

Increasing geopolitical tensions can impact our domestic security landscape and affect the way we live, work and play, but Singapore's position and the issues we take on are driven by what is in our national interest.



2. Safeguard Social Fabric

Verify information we receive to guard against disinformation, fake news and cyberattacks, and foreign interference attempts to manipulate our domestic politics or undermine our political sovereignty and harm our social cohesion.



3. Understand the Larger Issues

Seemingly non-security related events such as rising inflation and disrupted food supply can adversely affect the livelihoods of Singaporeans. HT officers need to be mindful of how these can have an impact on maintaining law and order in our country.



4. Be Vigilant Against Extremism

Extremist ideology is dangerous in our multi-racial and multi-religious society. Officers need to be vigilant of individuals who show signs of radicalisation, and should not themselves support extremist groups in any form. It is important to counter-check information and teachings against reputable and credible sources.

Pledge Your Support

Take 5 mins to reflect on the following:

1. In the past year, how has Total Defence been relevant to me and those around me?
2. How can I support and put Total Defence into action in my daily life?

Scan here to pledge your support:



Resources

Download the TD package by scanning the QR code on the right or visiting:
<https://go.gov.sg/sg10td2023package>



ACT AGAINST SCAMS



What are the signs of scams? Learn with Ah Lian on how to protect yourself with tips from MOS Sun Xueling:

>> go.gov.sg/mos-x-ahlian-scams

LIONHEARTERS IN TURKEY



SCDF sent a team of 68 officers to aid search and rescue efforts following Monday's quake. Watch how officers rescued a boy from the rubble:

>> go.gov.sg/scdf-olh-090223

EXTRAORDINARY



Watch this new series from SPF about officers who give back to the community on top of their daily policing work:

>> go.gov.sg/spf-xtraord-280123

GOT A MINUTE?

Thanks for being an HT Connect newsletter subscriber!

Any feedback on this month's HT Connects issue? Let us know by scanning the QR code or email us at MHA_HTVOLUNTEERS@mha.gov.sg



See you on our next HT connects issue! 😊



Have a story to share? Connect with Us



One Home, One Team – Together We Keep Our Home Safe and Secure

