

MEDIA ADVISORY:

54th War Memorial Service in Commemoration of the Civilian Victims of the Japanese Occupation and Total Defence Day Commemoration 2021 and Launch of e-Book on *The Story Behind the Civilian War Memorial*

The 54th War Memorial Service in Commemoration of the Civilian Victims of the Japanese Occupation and Total Defence Day Commemoration 2021, co-organised by Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) and Central National Education Office of MINDEF (Nexus), was held on 15 February 2021. The Guest-of-Honour was Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister for Education.

As the Chinese saying goes, “History guide us to understand why nations rise and fall; people guide us to understand right and wrong.” In line with the blended learning model to be implemented by the Ministry of Education, SCCCI launched the e-book on *The Story Behind the Civilian War Memorial* after the War Memorial Service. The e-book allows Singaporeans, especially the younger generation, to understand the journey that the different ethnic groups in Singapore took to build a home together from the ravages of war. It also traced the sacrifices our forefathers made. The e-book aims to strengthen our sense of Singapore identity.

SCCCI President Mr Roland Ng said: “Adapting to the changing times, SCCCI launched the e-book on *The Story Behind the Civilian War Memorial*, demonstrating the Spirit of Chinese Entrepreneurs with the elements of ‘integrity, loyalty, giving back and innovation’. We hope to do our part in preserving Singapore’s history and cultural heritage through working with the government and community groups, actively promoting National Education efforts, such as building the Memorial and organising the War Memorial Service.”

Since our late founding Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew unveiled the Civilian War Memorial in 1967, SCCCI has dedicated itself to holding the Civilian War Memorial Service on 15 February every year without fail. On that fateful day in 1942, Singapore fell to the Japanese. The War Memorial Service reminds Singaporeans to treasure peace as a prerequisite for a stable society and thriving economy. The 15th of February also marks the Total Defence Day.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, SCCCI received support from MINDEF to continue with its annual War Memorial Service with strict safety management measures, reiterating the importance of National Education and Total Defence.

This year, we celebrate our 56th anniversary of nationhood. While the pandemic has created unprecedented challenges, Singapore, as a young sovereign country, is more resilient and

capable of adaption. The continued prosperity of Singapore depends on all of us, young and old. Only by putting aside our differences and learning about our past together, regardless of race or language, can we work together for a better future. Standing before the four tapering columns of the Civilian War Memorial, symbolising the shared experiences and unity among the different races in Singapore, 50 representatives from SCCCI, MINDEF, inter-religious representatives, SAF Veterans' League, and the families of the war victims, reaffirmed the principles of multiracialism and total defence.

The public can access the e-book on *The Story Behind the Civilian War Memorial* via the following link: <http://bit.ly/SCCCI-WMS>.

For further enquiries, please contact:

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About Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Established in 1906, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) is an internationally renowned business organisation and the apex body of the Chinese business community in Singapore. It is the founder of the biennial World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention, a global business convention. It plays a key and pro-active role in representing the interests of the local business community.

The SCCCI has a membership network comprising 5,000 corporate members and has more than 160 trade association members, representing over 40,000 companies including large financial and business organisations, multinational corporations, government-linked companies, and small and medium enterprises from a wide spectrum of trades and industries. These members together provide vast resources and opportunities which enable the SCCCI to develop an influential global Chinese business network for business, education, culture and community development. In return, they share a strong sense of pride and identity together and benefit immensely from the SCCCI's membership services, facilities and activities.