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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT DR TONY TAN KENG YAM PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE AT LIANHE ZAobao'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY GALA
DINNER ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Mr Goh Chok Tong
Emeritus Senior Minister
and Mrs Goh

Dr Yaacob Ibrahim
Minister for Communications and Information

Mr Gan Kim Yong
Minister for Health
and Mrs Gan

Ms Grace Fu
Minister in Prime Minister's Office

Dr Lee Boon Yang
Chairman, Singapore Press Holdings

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate a significant milestone in Lianhe Zaobao's history, its 90th Anniversary. Lianhe Zaobao's history can be traced to the formation of the Nanyang Siang Pau in 1923, and the Sin Chew Jit Poh in 1929. In 1983, the two papers merged to form the Lianhe Zaobao we know today. One of the longest surviving Chinese newspapers in the world, Zaobao has played a significant role in Singapore's nation building. It has also built up a reputation for its insightful perspective into political and economic affairs in East Asia and Southeast Asia, reaching more than 700,000 readers daily. Zaobao Online also receives more than 10 million visitors each month and averages 4 million daily page views.

I am pleased to see how Zaobao has risen to the challenge of media convergence, with Zaobao available on smartphones, iPad and social media platforms as well. Zaobao has not only managed to retain its existing readers, it has managed to attract even more readers by enhancing its content, raising its journalistic standards and going into more platforms. Last year, Zaobao undertook a facelift to provide readers with an even more appealing and engaging read. I understand that the revamp has been well received by both readers and advertisers alike. Zaobao has to continue adapting to the fast changing media landscape, while remaining relevant to its readers, both at home and overseas.

As a national newspaper, Zaobao has also played a key role in preserving and upholding the traditional culture and values of Chinese Singaporeans by promoting the Chinese language. It has helped to inculcate a love of the Chinese language and culture amongst the young through its publications and cultural activities. It now publishes a whole range of student publications -- *Zaobao Thumbs Up Junior* for lower primary; *Thumbs Up* for upper primary; and *Zaobao Comma* for secondary school students. Last month, a new publication for pre-school children titled *Thumbs Up Little Junior* was launched. Beyond education, Zaobao has also been actively involved in promoting the arts through exhibitions and performances. Just last week, in conjunction with Zaobao's 90th anniversary, the paper organised a free mega outdoor dance, music, theatre and visual arts extravaganza at Fort Canning Park.

Above all, I wish to commend Zaobao for the part it has played in nation building, something that may be taken for granted by other newspapers in many other countries. Its brand of responsible constructive journalism helps to encourage debate and feedback, educate and inform readers in a balanced manner, while bringing different segments of

Singapore's Chinese community together. *Zaobao Crossroads* is a good example. Since 2009, this weekly section offers special features and reports on topical issues of interest, reaching out to new immigrants. It serves as a bridge to help new immigrants integrate into their new country while promoting Singaporeans' understanding of the new immigrants as well. Besides this, *Zaobao* profiles stories of ordinary people from all races who contribute to society in their own ways. Collectively, these efforts have helped to promote greater inclusiveness in Singapore.

I am glad to note that *Zaobao* has persevered in grooming talent for its leadership succession. Under the guidance of the newspaper's able and experienced editors, increasing numbers of young, committed and dedicated journalists have taken over senior positions. They have brought with them not only their skills but also fresh insights to deal with the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead. This practice of attracting fresh talent must be maintained for the newspaper to keep abreast with the interests of younger readers and to navigate new challenges in a rapidly changing Singapore and world.

To conclude, let me congratulate *Zaobao* once again on its achievements over the last 90 years. As the Chinese saying goes, 光辉不朽, 传之久远, a shining light passed on for generations. I would like to wish *Zaobao* an ever brighter future.

Thank you.
