

## **SURVEYING AWARENESS LEVELS ON IMPORTANCE OF TOTAL DEFENCE AND ENHANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION ON DIGITAL DEFENCE**

**Mr Neil Parekh Nihil Rajnikant** asked the Minister for Defence (a) whether the Ministry has conducted surveys on the level of awareness of the importance of Total Defence amongst Singaporeans; (b) if so, whether an update can be provided on the findings of such surveys; and (c) what role can the Digital Defence pillar of Total Defence play in the overall efforts to educate Singaporeans about protecting themselves in the cyberspace and in particular against scammers.

**Dr Ng Eng Hen:** The Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) regularly conducts surveys on Singaporeans' awareness of and support for Total Defence. In the latest survey conducted in 2024, about 90% of respondents said they are willing to play their part in Total Defence. Through regular engagements with schools, businesses, and communities, as well as the annual Exercise SG Ready, we seek to maintain a high level of awareness and support among Singaporeans on Total Defence, and raise their readiness to deal with crisis scenarios.

Digital Defence was introduced as the sixth pillar of Total Defence in 2019 to defend ourselves against a range of online and digital threats such as disinformation and scams. The Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) runs a National Cybersecurity Campaign and conducts talks and workshops for different population segments, focusing on evolving threats and the steps to take to protect themselves. In this year's Exercise SG Ready, the Singapore Business Federation is organising a phishing exercise to help businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, strengthen their resilience against cyberattacks. The Singapore Institute of Directors has also recently launched a Cyber Resilience Guide to enhance corporate leaders' cyber readiness.

To better protect Singapore's Critical Information Infrastructure (CII) systems, the Digital and Intelligence Service and CSA co-organises the Critical Infrastructure Defence Exercise (CIDeX) annually. The exercise brings together industry and Government partners to train for realistic scenarios and stress-test the cyber defence systems of our CII. Last year's exercise involved over 200 cyber defenders from 28 organisations across many sectors, including power and telecommunications.

MINDEF will continue to work with partners to encourage Singaporeans to raise their digital literacy, develop and maintain good cybersecurity habits, protect sensitive data, and guard against scams, fake news and disinformation so as to make the digital domain a safer and more secure space.