A bittersweet homecoming
Pulau Sakeng no longer exists, but evocative memories linger on

Loh Chee Kong

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SINGAPORE snippets

President has support of Malays

M inister in Charge of Muslim Affairs Yaacob Ibrahim said President S R Nathan, who is seeking re-election, had the overwhelming support of Malays in Singapore.

Dr Yaacob said Mr Nathan had shown genuine interest in the community, and had lent his support to many charitable causes. "His presidency will help Singapore to grow and mature into a country that is progressive, that shows the softer aspect of our society," he said.

— Channel NewsAsia

Illegal 4D, betting ring busted

Police smashed an illegal horse-betting and 4D syndicate, arresting 13 people in an islandwide operation on Saturday. Illegal bets would be collected in HDB flats while the betting transactions were conducted over the phone. Betting records amounting to about $116,000 on illegal horse-racing and illegal 4D were seized. — Channel NewsAsia

Nan Hua goes Autonomous

IF TANISHA, 15, gets her way, she’ll be off on a school trip to Australia next year.

That’s top on her wish list now that her school, Nan Hua Secondary, has been accorded Autonomous status, a move that will bring in more Government funding.

With its new status taking effect next year, Nan Hua will get an extra $300 per student annually, which works out to $480,000 for its 1,600 students.

It will also have “more freedom and resources to create new programmes and activities,” said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong last night at Nan Hua’s 85th anniversary dinner cum official opening of its new campus in Clementi.

In addition, Nan Hua will join 13 Singapore schools that offer Malay language classes to non-Malay students.

“With this will complement Nan Hua’s strength in the Chinese language,” said Mr Lee. He noted that the proportion of Nan Hua students taking Higher Chinese stands at 79 per cent this year, compared to 21 per cent in 2000 before the school came under the Special Assistance Plan.

— Christie Loh