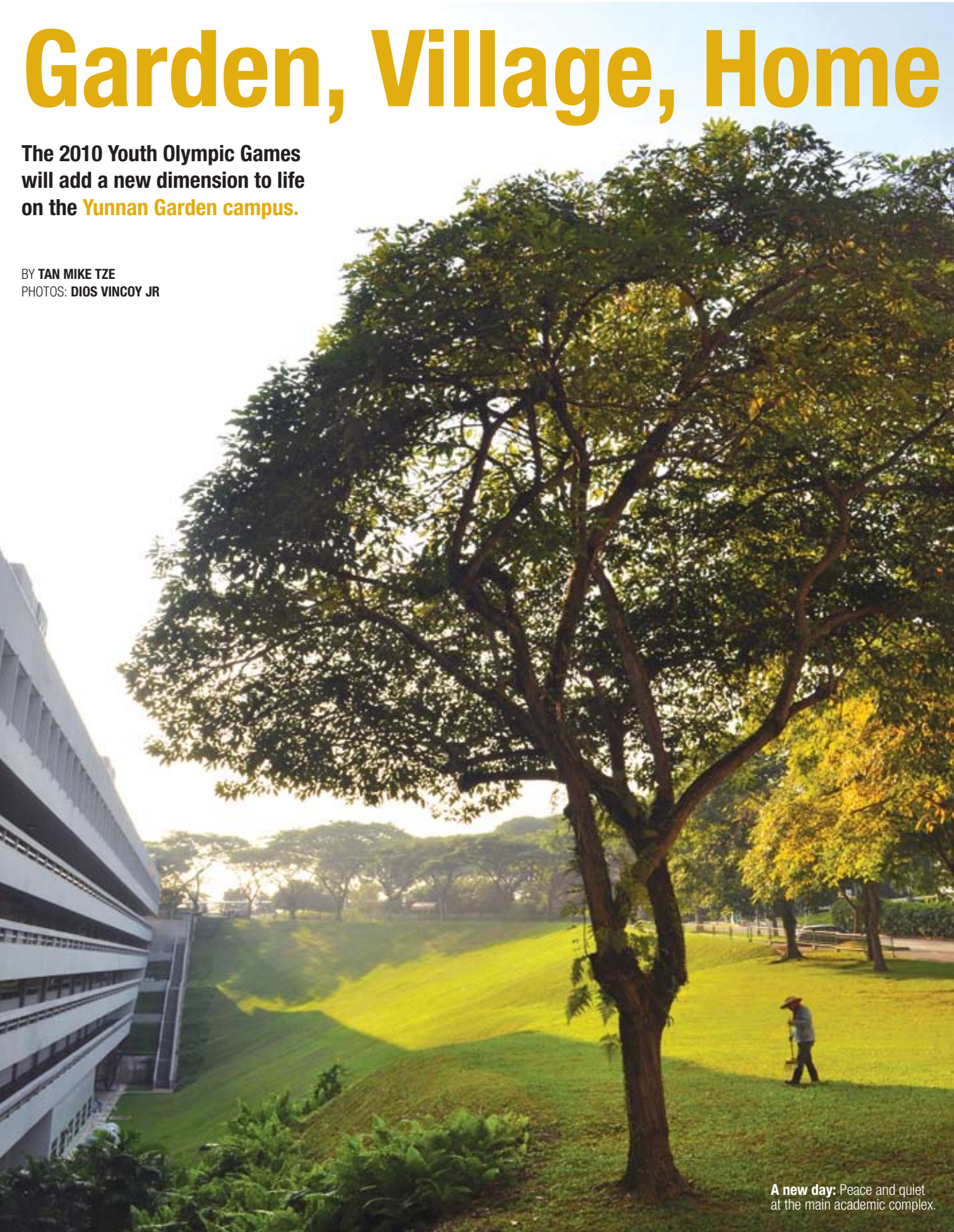


Garden, Village, Home

The 2010 Youth Olympic Games will add a new dimension to life on the **Yunnan Garden campus**.

BY **TAN MIKE TZE**
PHOTOS: **DIOS VINCOY JR**



A new day: Peace and quiet at the main academic complex.

PHOTO: NTU CCO



It is the experience of being here – and the interactions among hosts and guests – that defines the Olympic spirit of human endeavour, and ensures that the memories will continue forever. I hope as many NTU students as possible will be able to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime experience, and keep the NTU and Singapore flags flying high!

– NTU PRESIDENT **DR SU GUANING**, AUGUST 2008

For many students, life at NTU is defined by the hustle and bustle of academia, and the spirited exchange of ideas. So the semestral break brings another one of those odd times in the life of the university – hallways once teeming with students are now less congested, with fewer lecture theatres in use. While seminars and courses ensure that the campus remains vibrant, these quieter moments are gentle reminders that NTU's role as an institution of higher learning encompasses other identities as well – to many faculty members and students, the university is also a recreation space, office and home.

In August 2010, NTU's Yunnan Garden campus will enter the international spotlight as the Youth Olympic Village for the inaugural Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The event will add a new dimension to the Yunnan Garden campus, with the promise of even better things to come.

GARDEN, VILLAGE, HOME



Home away from home: The Halls of Residence in NTU's northern sector will be newly refurbished for the YOG.

A HOME FOR THE GAMES

Following a spirited nationwide campaign, the announcement in February 2008 that Singapore had won the bid to host the YOG was greeted with euphoria. In the original proposal by the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee (SYOGOC), the Village was intended to be the National University of Singapore's University Town (currently under construction). In August 2008, the SYOGOC made the decision for practical reasons to shift the Village to the alternative site of NTU.

With its serene environment, the Yunnan Garden campus will be an ideal home for the over 5,000 expected international athletes and officials. In its final incarnation, the Village will comprise

the northern sector of the university, with 10 Halls of Residence and the Graduate Hall serving as residential facilities. NTU's National Institute of Education (NIE) will be the Village Square, while other sites will become training and learning facilities.

TRANSFORMING THE CAMPUS

The task of transforming campus into Village is one that the university community has taken on with gusto. At NTU's Office of Facilities Planning & Management (OFPM), plans were quickly drawn up for comprehensive refurbishment and upgrading works to 10 Halls of Residence and the Graduate Hall, along with enhancements to the cluster of facilities at NTU's Sports &

Recreation Centre. In December 2008, a pilot project began with work on two residential blocks at Hall of Residence 12.

According to OFPM Divisional Director Mr Andy Tan, one of the major challenges has been that some of the residential facilities are well-used, and so require both aesthetic and functional renovation. "The pilot project allowed us to understand our site constraints and work processes better, so that we could make them more seamless when we embarked on the full-scale refurbishment and upgrading works during the semestral break," he explains. "So far, we have been keeping to the plan, and every day there are new accomplishments that bring us one step closer to delivering the Village."

Works in progress

WHEN THE ATHLETES and officials arrive for the YOG, they will find a Village that has been optimised for their comfort and needs. Here's a preview of what they can expect.

LIVING

- 10 Halls of Residence and the Graduate Hall refurbished, with upgraded rooms, lounges, pantries, showers and toilet facilities.

DINING

- Meals centralised at NIE, the Village Square. The landmark Rainforest Café will sport a new sound-absorbing ceiling, while the existing glass roof panels will be replaced with "low-E" glass that allows light in while reducing the amount of heat.
- In a joint initiative with NIE students, more tropical plants will be grown at the Rainforest Café, so as to introduce athletes and officials to native flora.

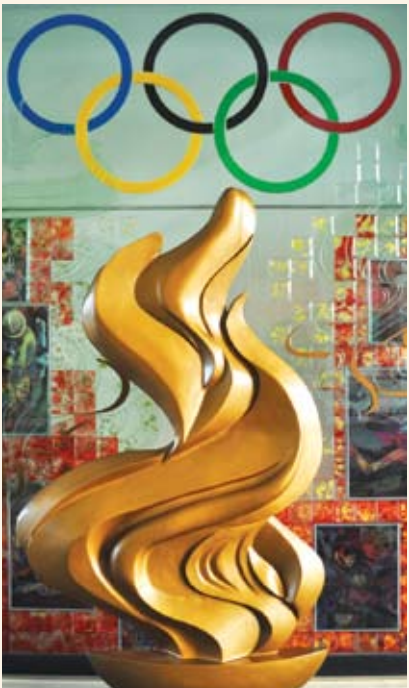
- New washrooms and a lift added to the Rainforest Café to increase comfort and access.
- A temporary kitchen added to the area between Blocks 2 and 3, with outfitting to be done by the SYOGOC.

LEARNING

- Education is one of the priorities of the inaugural YOG, and the Village Square will offer athletes world-class learning facilities, with upgraded classrooms and lecture theatres.

TRAINING

- Facilities at NTU's Sports & Recreation Centre will be refurbished to meet the requirements of the SYOGOC, with the running track and playing field upgraded. New floodlights will also be installed.
- The Centre itself will undergo works and a new changing facility will be built at the playing field.
- NIE's hockey pitch plus its indoor and outdoor courts will be upgraded.



The Olympic Mural at NIE, unveiled by Dr Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee, in April 2008.



Residences at the ready.



Touch football at NTU's playing field.



NIE's sports facilities.

GARDEN, VILLAGE, HOME



Sporting measures: The sports facilities on campus will serve as training and recreational venues for the athletes of the YOG.

A LEGACY FOR STUDENTS

Over at NIE, the Development & Estate Department (DED) led by Mr Selvarajan Selvaratnam has also moved into high gear, with works planned from June 2009 onwards. Like OFPM, DED has had to work in phases, with construction taking place discreetly through the regular school term, then intensifying during semestral breaks. One of the guiding principles behind the refurbishment is that it remains integral to the needs of the university's students, who will be the final beneficiaries of the works. "This is very important to us," explains Mr Selvaratnam. "Not only do we want the international athletes and officials to have a great experience here, we are also

careful to make sure that the enhancements are left as a legacy for students."

WELCOMING THE WORLD

All the refurbishment and upgrading works are scheduled to be completed in phases by mid-2010, in order for the SYOGOC and government agencies to test the systems that will be applied over the facilities. These comprise the array of communications, security and transportation features that are part of any major global event. In other words, come 2010, NTU will be transformed even further. For students, faculty, staff and alumni, it will be a moment of pride when NTU extends a welcome to the world. ■

IMAGE: NTU OFPM

Ready for the world: The Youth Olympic Village will comprise two major areas: the Village Square and the Residential Zone.

Environmental factors

STUDENTS AND FACULTY MEMBERS have long known the attractions of the Yunnan Garden campus. Four reasons why NTU holds a place in our hearts:

- A heritage of learning and innovation
- Leading-edge research and teaching facilities
- A place for the arts and culture
- An international community that works and learns together

PHOTO: GAN CHEONG WEI

Singapore is committed to hosting a successful inaugural YOG, [and] the NTU campus will make an outstanding Games Village.

— MR NG SER MIANG, CHAIRMAN OF SYOGOC