iFAST Corporation Pte Ltd

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT BONDS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

Singapore, 15 December 2003 – What pays around 4.2% annually and is guaranteed by the Singapore Government?

It's SGS Bonds, or Singapore Government Securities (Bonds). These are debt instruments issued and guaranteed by the Singapore government. The Singapore Government has a credit rating of AAA, which makes SGS Bonds among the safest investments in the world. As of 12.12.03, the 5-year benchmark SGS Bond pays an annual yield of about 2.71%*, the 10-year benchmark issue pays about 3.74%*, and 15-year benchmark pays about 4.2%*. That is significantly higher than what you can get from fixed deposits, and the guaranteed returns of most structured deposits, capital protected funds, and insurance products.

And from this week, SGS Bonds can be purchased online at Fundsupermart.com, making the government issues more readily available to the investing public. Fundsupermart.com is the only online entity to distribute SGS Bonds. The investment portal hopes to raise the awareness of SGS Bonds amongst Singaporeans, and help to promote an active secondary retail SGS bond market in Singapore.

Says the Monetary Authority of Singapore on the launch of SGS Bonds online at Fundsupermart.com: "MAS endeavours to make SGS more readily available to the retail investment public. Presently, retail investors can buy SGS either at primary auctions or "over-the-counter" in the secondary market with a SGS trading account with any participating bank. Fundsupemart's initiative will provide retail investors with another avenue to access SGS."

SGS Bonds have been available to the retail public for some time now, and is part of the strategy of the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) to develop Singapore into an international debt hub. However, SGS Bonds have yet to gain a foothold in the consciousness of the investing public despite its very attractive attributes. Of about S$65 billion in total outstanding SGS Bonds, only S$32 million, or 0.05%, is in retail hands as of October 2003. Why is that?

"Right now SGS Bonds are mainly dealt between financial institutions. The participation by retail investors is limited today because it is difficult for the banks to make it commercially viable. But for an online investment portal like Fundsupermart, the potential is tremendous," says Lim Chung Chun, Executive Chairman of online unit trust distributor Fundsupermart.com.

Incorporated into the Fundsupermart.com website is a section on SGS Bonds, which displays all the information of the various SGS Bonds that Fundsupermart.com deals in. There are also articles and tools available to help investors. For instance, investors can use the bond calculator to calculate the total price or yield-to-maturity of the bonds that they are interested in, and the various charts on yields allow them to have a sense of the trends in yields.

As a secondary dealer, Fundsupermart.com provides a very convenient transactional platform for SGS bonds. It administers the entire buy/sell process for SGS bonds, including coupon payments, and it interfaces with MAS-appointed primary dealers to obtain the best price quotes for all SGS bonds on behalf of investors.

"The value proposition we offer to clients is two-fold. First, we aggregate the retail orders and negotiate better prices for our customers than what they can generally get individually at a bank. Second, we provide an easy way for customers to transact online, and to monitor their SGS Bonds holdings. We also provide online content to guide investors on how to invest in SGS Bonds," says Lim.

Fundsupermart.com charges a fee of 0.1% (of face value) for each buy order. There is no charge for a sell order or the final redemption at maturity. Fundsupermart.com also levies a custody fee of 0.1% of the face value of each customer's investments per annum. This fee is taken from the coupon payments to investors (SGS Bonds pays coupon on a semi-annual basis).

Says Lim: "Singaporeans are generally under-invested in bonds as an asset class, despite our status as a financial centre. There is an estimated S$150 billion in savings and fixed deposits in the banks in Singapore. A good part of that should really find its way into the bond market. And for most countries, the development of the retail bond markets generally start with the safest issues – the government bonds."

* Net of all charges at Fundsupermart.com

– End –