

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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SPEECH BY INCHE MOHD. GHAZALI, CHAIRMAN OF
LANGUAGE WEEK COMMITTEE AT VICTORIA THEATRE
ON AUGUST 21, 1964 AT 10 A.M.

This is the third time the Singapore Government has launched a National Language Week in efforts to extend the use of the national language in our society.

The response given by Malay and non-Malay organisations, educational bodies such as University of Singapore, Nanyang University, Ngee Ann College, Polytechnic, Teachers Training College and all schools in Singapore, has been so clear and concrete as to make this year's Language Week effective and successful.

This is the first Language Week to be held in Singapore after joining Malaysia. The Government's determination to make this year's Language Week effective and successful is clear.

As a multi-racial country, Malaysia needs one common language which can be understood by all communities who are citizens of Malaysia. Communal unity can be strengthened, peaceful living can be promoted and nationalism can be established, if we have one common language.

The Singapore Government has recognised Malay as the National language of this country, and efforts made by the Government during the last five years are clear signs that the Government is really determined to extend the use of the national language among all communities.

Government's campaign to encourage non-Malays to study the national language has met with success. Every year, more non-Malays are making efforts to study and extend the use of the national language.

One of the proofs which we can see is the increase in the number of higher educational bodies taking part in this year's language week. Their total number is three times that of last year.

Last year, only 38 items were arranged by these bodies in their Language Week Programme. This year, nearly 60 items have been successfully arranged by these bodies. This does not include programmes arranged by the Ministry of Education for schools throughout Singapore.

Non-Malays realise the importance of the national language in strengthening communal unity. This is proved by the number of non-Malays taking part in this year's Language Week activities. It can be said that 80 percent of those taking active part in this week's activities are Chinese and Indians. This is a good sign that the national language can become a language medium for all communities within a very short time.

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It is our hope that our efforts to implement the use of the national language as a language medium for all communities, can be intensified next year.

Malay and non-Malay language and cultural organisations should cooperate closely to attain that target.

The sooner the national language can become a language medium for all communities, the better for all people of Malaysia.

I congratulate all organisations and educational bodies which have arranged their own programmes to welcome the Language Week and make it a very effective and successful.

It is hoped that their efforts would become an important contribution to the carrying out of our responsibility towards the national language.

I wish success to all people of Singapore in welcoming and serving the cause of our common language.

I now invited the Minister for Culture, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, to make his speech.

AUGUST 21, 1964.

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