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SPEECH BY THE POLITICAL LIAISON SECRETARY TO THE
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, INCHE' MOHD. GHAZALI ISMAIL,
AT THE CEREMONY MARKING THE CLOSE OF THE NATIONAL
LANGUAGE WEEK, ON AUGUST 28TH, 1964 AT 8.00 P.M.

The Singapore Government is proud and happy that the National Language Week, which comes to a close tonight, has received such a tremendous response from people of all races.

Judging from the extensive programmes that have been put up during the Week, by the number of people taking part in these programmes and by the earnestness shown by these participants, there is no denying that this year's National Language Week has had a good effect on the people of Singapore.

About 78 per cent of those who have actively taken part in this year's National Language Week are non-Malays. This goes to show that our non-Malay friends have realised the necessity of having a common language as a means of uniting the various races into a single united Malaysian nation.

The Government of Singapore has always been doing its best to carry out programmes which it thinks may spread the use of the national language amongst the people.

As chairman of the National Language Week Working Committee, I would like to express my thanks to all those who have helped make a success of this year's National Language Week. I am most grateful to the organisations, the institutions of higher learning, individuals, etc., who have given their contributions to make this year's National Language Week the effective and successful language week that it is.

I also wish to express my thanks to the press such as the Straits Times, the Malay Mail, Sin Chew Jit Poh, the Nanyang Siang Pau and other Chinese and Tamil newspapers for having given publicity to and fair reports of the National Language Week activities.

The contribution they have made will doubtless be remembered by the people of Singapore.

In view of the tremendous response from the people of Singapore to the efforts to popularise the national language and the great successes that have been achieved during this year's National Language Week, the Singapore Government has decided to hold a National Language Month instead of National Language Week as from next year.

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The National Language Month will be divided into two parts. The first part, which will last for two weeks, will be launched in six months' time.

The various organisations, centres of higher learning and all others concerned are therefore urged to make preparations as from now to celebrate the first part of the National Language Month next year.

The Government feels that it is important to hold a National Language Month six months from now in view of the good response the National Language Week has received from the people of Singapore.

Although the National Language has come to a close, the spirit of the National Language Week will continue to live. The Singapore Government will arrange a number of programmes so as to increase its efforts to popularise the National Language.

Many of the programmes carried out during the last week that are telecast and broadcast will be continued.

One of the programmes that will be continued and become a permanent feature is the ten-world-a-day lesson telecast every evening during the National Language Week. This programme will be continued so as to enable our non-Malay friends to increase their knowledge of the National Language by ten words a day.

The Government will also introduce a new programme on the television in connection with the teaching of the National Language. This programme which will last five minutes will be telecast once a week. Word-quizz programme, etc., will also be introduced in the teaching of the National Language.

Another item which will be made a permanent feature is the words of introduction before the reading of the news on the radio and television.

The Singapore Government is doing all these in its determination to spread the use of the National Language among the people as quickly as possible.

While we are waiting for the first part of the National Language Month to come, I hope that the spirit of the National Language will continue to be kept aflame in the hearts of the masses.

The National Language is our common language. The National Language is a golden bridge that will lead us to a glorious future in Malaysia.

AUGUST 28, 1964.

(Time issued: 1730 hours)