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Chairman, Friends,

I could not think of a more opportune time to hold a Junior Science Assembly Exhibition when we are going full out in our industrialised programme and just before our 150th Anniversary. I must congratulate the Singapore Science Teachers' Association for their initiative and effort in making this exhibition a success.

2. Singapore has only 224 square miles, with no natural resources. We have no tin, no iron and no rubber, and we do not have sufficient agricultural products. What make Singapore to-day are our strategic geographical location, our accumulation of infrastructure and experiences in commerce, industries, and communications, and most important, our human resources; two million capable, hard-working citizens, dedicated and patriotic.
3. Recently, there was a survey carried out by an overseas independent organisation on the relative attractiveness and investment environment of 8 major cities in this region. They listed 22 factors which are considered important. Of these, only three are related to geographical situation. Indeed, it must be so, otherwise, our surrounding islands would become a serious competitor.
4. Of the two million citizens we have, more than 50% are youth under 21. They are our most valuable asset. Since 9 years ago, when we took office, we have spared no effort in developing this resource of ours. And we know that for Singapore to survive and to remain as a thriving, prosperous and economically viable nation, we must industrialised. The success will depend on the standard of our achievements in science and technology.
5. The development of science and technology must necessarily be related to the national requirements and be able to apply to our economic development. There must be closer co-operation between industries and education.
6. For example, we must concentrate our effort in developing our own electronic industry, manufacturing our own transistors, and electronic components before we ever contemplate on research into the expanding Universe. I may sound too utilitarian, but that is the fact of life. If we cannot manufacture quality cement and if our building workers cannot mix good concretes, then, we should not build 50-storey buildings. They will just crumble down like powder. Fortunately, we have both good cement and skillful builders.
7. Finally, I wish to thank the Singapore Science Teachers' Association for inviting me here and to wish them and our future scientists and technologists success. I now have pleasure to declare this Junior Science Assembly Exhibition open.

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1000 hours on Tuesday 13/8