

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR. S. RAMASWAMI, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(LAW) AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR POTONG PASIR ON THE
OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MAJOR EXTENSIONS
OF SANG NILA UTAMA SECONDARY SCHOOL ON FRIDAY, 12th
JUNE, 1970 AT 7.30 P.M.

This evening is a very happy occasion for all of us who are here to witness the opening of major extensions to this school. I am indeed honoured to have been invited to perform the opening ceremony.

Sang Nila Utama Secondary School was officially opened by the then Minister for Education, Mr. Teng Nyuk Lin, on 14th October, 1968. Built by the present Government this school represents a concrete manifestation of the government's policy of parity for all the four language streams in education namely, English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. Present extensions will result in the provision of extra facilities. It may take a few years more before this bears fruit in the form of higher attainments, mentally and physically.

Since its establishment, the school has made good progress in both the academic field and extra-curricular activities. It provides secondary education up to Pre-University level in the Malay medium. I understand that at present there are already three batches of students from this school pursuing courses of study at the University of Singapore, Monyang University and the University of Malaya.

This school is an integrated school with Malay and English as media of instruction. One of the best proven way of ensuring understanding, friendship and co-operation among the young in a multi-lingual and multi-racial society like ours is the establishment of such integrated schools which bring together under one roof, young citizens of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Here they learn and play together as they grow up, and are made aware thoroughly of one another's common goals, problems and even differences, and thus become more understanding and tolerant.

These new extensions provide the School with additional classrooms, science laboratories, Home Economic rooms and an audio visual aids room, so that adequate facilities are available for a broader and more liberal education. The present generation of students should consider themselves fortunate to have these

facilities and equipment. I do hope that they will not only make the most of them but also take pride in maintaining them.

We would like to do all these, and more. Better still, we would like to pack them into the curriculum, but there are only two ways to do this, viz. to take certain subjects out of the existing curriculum and to prolong hours in the classroom. But both of these are impossible, and much of the nation-building activities of school life have to be done outside school hours. Hence the importance of extra-curricular activities which must be as well organised as subjects in the time-table and pursued with the same kind of seriousness and purposiveness.

Looking around Singapore today we can see what Singaporeans can achieve when they help themselves and put the public interest before theirs. It might have required legislation and stringent law enforcement to educate the few who take longer to learn good habits but by now right habits have developed and our public places are clean. We shall get rid of mosquitoes, reduced air and water pollution so that not only plants but human beings can thrive. We have to be conscious of these civic needs and it is these acts of conduct that entitle us to be called an educated society. And in this, I have ground for optimism whenever I see beautiful gardens develop in school compounds, and well-educated and discerning young people who do not imitate blindly foreign fads and fashions, but do their best to help build a truly just and equitable society for all.

I shall conclude by thanking the Principal for inviting me here, today, and now I have the pleasure of declaring upon the major extensions to this school.

PRESS SECTION,
MINISTRY OF CULTURE.

12TH JUNE, 1970.