

SPEECH BY MR LEE YOCK SUAN, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION,
AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF PILING CEREMONY FOR
TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC'S NEW CAMPUS AT TAMPINES
ON MON 23 NOVEMBER 92 AT 10 AM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here this morning to drive the first pile for Temasek Polytechnic's new campus.

This is a significant moment in the development of Temasek Polytechnic.

The piling that commences today will lay the foundation for what will be a landmark campus in Tampines.

2 With such a panoramic view of the Bedok Reservoir, I am sure the students joining the polytechnic from July 95 could not ask for a better site for their campus.

3 The foundation has been laid for the rapid expansion of polytechnic education in Singapore.

In the coming years, about forty percent from each cohort of school-leavers will be able to benefit from a polytechnic education.

4 The rapid expansion of polytechnic education means that school-leavers will have more choices for further education and training than ever before.

They will form the vast pool of trained and educated young people and help pave the way for Singapore's next stage of growth.

5 The polytechnics now offer close to fifty different courses in a wide variety of areas.

These are all market-related and in demand by the economy.

The newer Temasek and Nanyang Polytechnics offer courses in Design, Tourism, Health Sciences, Retail Management, Legal Studies and Financial Risk Management.

Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic have recently introduced courses such as Quality Assurance, Materials Technology and Process Engineering.

What we have, therefore, is a broadening of the concept of polytechnic education.

6 Years ago, polytechnic education used to mean mainly engineering or technical courses.

Today, you can pick from a whole range of courses at the polytechnics, including biotechnology, nursing, banking, nautical studies and software technology.

In all these areas, the polytechnics have to ensure that the training is rigorous and that high academic standards are maintained.

This applies also to the newer polytechnics which are operating from temporary campuses.

7 To provide pupils with comprehensive information of the courses available, the four polytechnics will be promoting polytechnic education as a whole.

Each secondary school will be approached by only one polytechnic to give a standard presentation to students.

They will receive a common guidebook on the polytechnics.

At career exhibitions, the polytechnics will occupy a joint

exhibition stand.

The employment survey for polytechnic graduates will be by discipline rather than by institution.

8 Apart from the polytechnics, school-leavers have the choice of an academic route to university through junior colleges.

Those who are interested in a teaching career should pursue their 'A' levels and then enrol at the National Institute of Education for diploma or degree courses.

Faced with a diversity of choices, it is vital that students consider their choices carefully.

They should base their decisions on their interest, ability and aptitude.

They should also discuss their career and course options with their career guidance counsellors in school and with their parents.

9 To help pupils make more informed choices, my Ministry is working closely with the industries and the Economic Development Board to implement a "Teachers-In-Industry" project. To be launched as a pilot project soon, its aim is to enable school career guidance counsellors to gain first-hand exposure to the workplace.

This will then enable them to better guide their students in making career choices.

10 The Government is committed to developing our citizens to their maximum potential.

They must exercise their education and career option with care.

Only then can the foundation which we have laid serve us well into the future.

11 I wish the Principal, staff and students of Temasek Polytechnic every success in their future endeavours.

Thank you.

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