

SPEECH BY MR ONG SOO CHUAN FOR THE FAR EAST CHARITY
DINNER ON 14.1.75 AT SHANGRI-LA HOTEL

I convey the sincere regrets of the Minister for Foreign Affairs for his inability to grace this function tonight due to circumstances arising beyond his control. May I then on behalf of the Minister, Mr S Rajaratnam extend a warm welcome to all participants of the Far East Charity Show and convey his deep appreciation for your artistic contributions towards such a worthy cause.

This evening's Charity Dinner is also being organised in aid of the scholarship funds of the Kampong Glam and Nee Soon Citizens' Consultative Committees. The scholarships will be awarded to deserving and capable students so that they may acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and thus contribute towards Singapore's progress and development.

As evident over the past years, the Singapore Government has always placed a high priority on the education of its youths. This is because of the acknowledged fact that Singapore's major asset lies in her people, the skills acquired and the adaptability of the working force to changing technologies and economic demands. For Singaporeans as such education must always be a prerequisite for prosperity and survival especially in a rapidly changing world. The study of history indeed provides an apt reminder in this context that great civilizations and societies have only flourished on the basis of the respect for learning and that when such respect is lost societies decay and ignorance prevails.

It is heartening to note that this performance is a contribution of various artistes from Asia, indeed a reassuring fact that Asians are helping fellow Asians for a deserving cause. At the same time, I am sure this cultural performances from the various artiste will help foster a deeper understanding amongst Asians.

Last but not least it leaves me to thank the participants, the organisers and all of you for your generous support and contributions towards the Far East Charity Show.

DATED: JANUARY 15, 1975

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