

SPEECH BY DR ANG KOK PENG, MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH
AT THE 152ND FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION OF RAFFLES
INSTITUTION ON FRIDAY, 30TH MAY 1975 AT 3 PM HELD
AT THE SCHOOL STADIUM, GRANGE ROAD

It is indeed a great honour for me to be invited to your 152nd Founder's Day celebration, especially when I do not share the privilege of being a Rafflesian like so many of your distinguished guests on such auspicious occasions in the past.

Founder's Day is always the time for the School to reflect upon the achievements of the past, ponder over the present and re-affirm its commitment to the ideals cherished by the School. In doing so, you have every reason to be proud, for through the portals of the School have passed many Old Boys who have excelled in various fields of activities in our society, and have contributed in no small measure to the social and economic progress of the country. From the Principal's report on the activities of the past one year I can see that you have not rested on your laurels but have continued to strive for higher goals. There was hardly any area of activities in which you have not done well, be it in the playing fields or in academic pursuits. You have successfully maintained your position as a premier school of Singapore. Any student would be proud of such a School.

There is, however, one area in which your school could do more and perhaps set an example for others to follow. I am thinking of the social and community welfare work of your charity squad. There are many lonely old folks and handicapped persons who could benefit from the visits of young people with freshness and vitality. They could do

with some assistance like tidying up their places, writing letters for them, keeping them company and relieving them of the daily monotony of their lives, and organising outings for them, and thereby making them feel that they are still a part of our society. These activities may not bring you as much recognition and prestige as other activities in the academic field or in sports. However, they do give added meaning to life for the young persons and a feeling of satisfaction of having done a good turn for a fellow being. It is important for our youth to express their idealism through rendering such services to the less fortunate, as with the rapid changes in our society it is so easy for us to think only of ourselves and only exert efforts that could bring benefit to us personally. I hope greater encouragement will be given to young people to engage in activities of this nature as this will act as a check on the tendency towards selfishness that commonly attends the process of industrialisation and modernisation of a society.

Besides talking about social and community services I should also like to mention some of the problems involving youth which confront us today. As you know, more than half of the crimes committed in Singapore are by young people. It is important, therefore, for you to be on your guard and not be involved in activities that may eventually lead to crime.

Another problem is drug addiction. This is a growing problem among our youth and is of great concern to us. Do not allow your curiosity for novel experience to lead you into drug addiction. The path to recovery for a drug addict is

painful and slow. The psychological re-adjustment to normal life is an agonising process.

Yet another problem that confronts us which I must mention is the growing incidence of sexually transmitted diseases among the youth. This appears to be a common problem in many countries. Because of the dangerous nature of these diseases which could affect even the next generation, I think, as youth you should understand and fully appreciate the nature of these diseases and take positive steps to make your fellow students aware of it through talks and seminars.

Before I conclude I would like to wish your School a very happy 152nd anniversary and hope that you will always maintain the fine traditions of your School.

30 May 1975