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Singapore Government PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY DR ALINE WONG, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & EDUCATION AND MP FOR TAMPINES GRC (CHANGKAT), AT QIAONAN PRIMARY SCHOOL'S 65TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE/MINI FAIR ON SATURDAY, 23 MAY 98, AT 10.00 AM, AT 15 TAMPINES ST 11

Miss Violet Khor, Principal, Qiaonan Primary School,
Mr Soon Ngah Toh, Chairman of Qiaonan Primary School Advisory Committee,
Members of the School Advisory Committee,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Girls and Boys,

It gives me great pleasure to join all of you in celebrating Qiaonan's 65th Anniversary.

2 Qiaonan Primary School has come a long way since the time it started as a kampong school at Lorong Koo Chye in 1933 with only 20 pupils and 2 teachers to its present status in Tampines Street 11. It now stands as a modern school with a pupil population of about 1400 and a teaching staff of 58 teachers. It is also equipped with all the modern facilities and resources such as computers to help prepare pupils for the challenges of the 21st Century.

3 Throughout the phase of transition, change and upgrading, there is one constant which has provided stability to the school. That is the sense of community which has encouraged people to willingly come forward to serve in the cause of education. The support of the School Advisory Committee is as earnest and unstinting now as it has always been in the past. I would like to personally extend my appreciation to the members of the School Advisory Committee for their warm-hearted support of the school.

4 I am also honoured to be associated with the School Alumni which was started last year. Members of the School Alumni have asked me to be their Patron to which I have agreed. The School Alumni provides a strong continuity of school traditions and a bonding among pupils from the same fraternity. Sixty-five years ago, the school management drew up the school's five core values of virtue, knowledge, health, co-operation and creativity. It is these values which have bound students together through the ages. I wish the School Alumni success in its future endeavours.

5 I am also heartened to see that Qiaonan, as a neighbourhood school, has always supported the activities of the grassroots organisations, particularly those organised by the Changkat Community Centre. More significantly, it has made available the school field to the CCMC's football club for practice on weekends. The Club, under the management of the Changkat CC Malay Activities Group has attracted many local residents to the CC and to the field. The young ones in particular enjoy the sport and the opportunity to meet friends. For this popular activity, I must thank the Principal of Qiaonan School for her very kind cooperation.

6 Good home-school partnership is vital in education because the school does not exist in a vacuum. It exists as part of a community which comprises parents of pupils and the people in the neighbourhood. There is a need to understand and support each other for the relationship to flourish. In this respect, I understand from the school principal that the school has also initiated the formation of a Qiaonan Parents Support Group and that you have had your first meeting. I welcome this development.

I would also like to congratulate the parents who have taken the time and effort to help out with the school's 65th Anniversary by setting up stalls for the mini-fair. I was told that there are 10 stalls set up by the parents.

7 Finally, I would also like to express my appreciation to the teachers for the hard work put in and to encourage you to continue to be shining examples to the little ones you have in your charge.

8 I wish Qiaonan Primary School continued success as you take on the challenges in the years ahead.