

TEXT OF SPEECH BY H.E. THE YANG DI-PERTUAN NEGARA,
TUN YUSOF BIN ISHAK, AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE
MALAYSIAN ORCHID SOCIETY AT THE CATHAY RESTAURANT
ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, AT 7.30 P.M.

It is with great pleasure that my wife and I find ourselves once again at another dinner of the Malaysian Orchid Society. The annual dinner of the Society judging by the large attendance here tonight is I am sure an event which the members of the Malaysian Orchid Society look forward to, but as your President has just mentioned the activities of the Society are by no means confined to the annual dinner. We are fully aware of the fact that the dedicated and energetic committee of the Malaysian Orchid Society is striving hard to improve and serve the members to the best of their ability. The progress of the Malaysian Orchid Society, since it was founded in 1928, has been remarkable. As I understand it, in the early years the Society did not have a large membership, most members being Singapore residents. The war years and the immediate post war years saw the decline of the Society, but in 1956 the Society was resuscitated, and from a membership of about 50 in that year it has now risen to nearly 2,000 with members scattered throughout the world. This is highly commendable and credit must certainly go to the committee of the Malaysian Orchid Society both past and present and the members for their excellent efforts.

In 1960 the Malaysian Orchid Society hit the headlines with its Gold Medal exhibit at Chelsea and in 1963 the orchid-growing countries of the world decided on Singapore as the venue for the 4th World Orchid Conference. This bears ample testimony to the importance the orchid world attaches to the Malaysian Orchid Society and the orchids of Malaysia. Not content to sit on its laurels, the Malaysian Orchid Society, I am glad to learn is now making preparations for its participation at the 5th World Orchid Conference to be held in Los Angeles next year. It is also heartening to know that our orchids will be on display at the Conference. The display of orchid blooms at International Shows and Conferences, such as the one to be held in Los Angeles, will help greatly to publicise the many hybrids which are being produced in large numbers every day in Malaysia. Such publicity I am sure will help our expanding orchid industry, especially the cut flower trade.

Today, many are making a living out of orchids and many have taken to orchid growing as a hobby. In the homes where floral decorations were once confined to garden flowers, they have now given way to orchids. The tourists now look to Malaysia as a country of orchids and not merely as a country where rubber and tin are produced. Our orchids today have become world famous and are being exported to many parts of the world. This situation I am sure would not have arisen had it not been for the combined efforts of the Malaysian Orchid Society, the Singapore Gardening Society and the Singapore Botanic Gardens.

Coming to this evening's function I would like to say how delighted my wife and I are to be with you all tonight. I would like to thank the President and his committee for their kind invitation and wish the Malaysian Orchid Society and its members continued success.

AUGUST 7, 1965.

(Time issued: 1530 hours)