

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE YANG DI-PERTUAN NEGARA,
TUN YUSOF BIN ISPAK, AT THE OPENING OF THE
DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE ON MONDAY, AUGUST 23,
AT 5.30 P.M.

It gives me great pleasure to address you as Chancellor of the University on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Singapore Medical School, which has now attained its 60th birthday since its foundation in 1905. Since the first graduates left the portals of this Medical School to tend to the sick in Singapore and Malaysia, there has been a succession of graduates who have manned the Medical Services so that through the years Singapore has attained one of the highest standards of medical care in South-East Asia. The infant mortality rate here is one of the lowest in the world, and Singapore situated in a potentially malarious area is free from this terrible scourge which still plagues countries in the tropical and semi-tropical regions of the world. It has been agreed by many Western medical experts that Singapore has one of the best hospital services in South-East Asia manned by graduates of this Medical School. All our specialists have had post-graduate training in the best centres in the United Kingdom, America and Australia.

Such achievements could only be attained by the excellence of the teaching, and high standards maintained in this Medical School. Furthermore, many graduates have themselves become teachers in this school and mindful of their grave responsibility, holding the torch of high standards bequeathed them by their predecessors, they will no doubt hand them over to equally well-trained and dedicated doctors to step into their shoes in the future.

It is therefore fitting that our Medical Faculty should celebrate this milestone in its progress, by chronicling the historical development in the various departments and the work which has been achieved in the various fields of medicine. This I understand will be demonstrated by a Medical Exhibition to be held during this Diamond Jubilee Week in this Medical Faculty Building, to which the public is invited. On the professional side, doctors from Singapore and Malaysia will congregate and participate in a Medical Congress where local research workers will present papers relating to medical advances in this region. Medicine as a professional discipline is a life-long study, and it is heartening to see that our doctors are always on their toes taking on new problems as worthwhile challenges and overcoming them with ingenuity and industry.

However, no matter how capable men may be, in whatever field they may be engaged, they must have the tools to do their work. It is with a full realisation of this, that the Medical Faculty and the Ministry of Health jointly set up plans for the expansion of medical research and care in Singapore. This has culminated in plans for a very worthwhile project, namely, the proposed Institute of Medical Specialities, which will house units for brain and heart surgery and the investigations of these cases, for the more efficient treatment of cancer, the study of inherited diseases and their prevention,

for the advanced studies and treatment of skin, blood, hormonal and other diseases. This joint venture with the help also of generous donations from the public will be a fitting monument to past achievements and future progress, and it is equally fitting that such a centre should materialise during this Diamond Jubilee Year.

I understand also from the programme for the Diamond Jubilee Week that there would be debates and forums on medical education, the organisation of which has been handled very efficiently by our medical student body. This participation by medical undergraduates in the celebrations is further evidence of the close links forged in the Medical Faculty and augurs well for the moulding of our future doctors. It is indeed most heartening to observe the high sense of responsibility shown by our undergraduate body in their future calling.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I understand also that the doctor is not only a healer of the sick, engaged in work the whole time without developing the other aspects of life which makes a well-educated person, and so the social side of the celebrations has not been forgotten. There will be occasions and socials where graduates will have a happy reunion, all coming back to their own beloved Medical School from whichever area they may be working. Graduates will pit their skill and stamina against younger undergraduates in various games and sporting events. I would therefore like to wish all of you every happiness and success for the week and progress for the future.

I have great pleasure now in declaring open the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Faculty of Medicine.

AUGUST 23, 1965.

(Time issued: 0900 hours)