

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC.NV 17/65 (ISTANA)

H.E. Yang di-Pertuan Negara, Enche Yusof bin Ishak, declaring open the Second National Language Month at the Singapore Conference Hall, on 12th November, 1965

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It was seven months ago that we launched the first National Language Month campaign for this year. To-day, we are launching another National Language Month campaign as yet another step in our endeavour to popularise the use of and the teaching of the National Language amongst our people.

In our State we have four official languages all of which enjoy equal status - Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English. Apart from being one of the official languages, Malay is also our common National Language. My Government is very determined to popularise the use of the National Language so that it can truly play its role as the lingua franca in our country.

Campaigns such as these have actually been launched for the last few years. All these National Language campaigns have always met with enthusiastic support from all our communities. It is my hope that the National Language Month which is being officially launched to-day will be even more successful.

Our society is a multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural one. Unity in diversity is our way of life. In our day to day life, we have for many years demonstrated our solidarity as one nation. The same attitude will prevail in the future - we are united in a common endeavour to secure a better life and in a common aspiration to create a more successful, just and prosperous state.

The National Language can do much to enable us to attain unity and understanding amongst ^{our} fellow citizens. It

is important for one community to know and understand the way of life and customs of the other communities. It is equally important for one section of the community to learn and respect the needs and the problems faced by the other sections of the community. These objectives can easily be achieved since we have a common language.

I call on the people of Singapore to regard our Second National Language Month as a further step in their resolution to master the National Language. For those who have already mastered the National Language, it will be worthwhile for them to learn the other languages. In a multi-racial and multi-lingual society, the more languages a person knows, the better it is for the individual and the nation.

The Government will increase its effort to help those of our citizens who have ^{not} yet mastered it to acquire a working knowledge of the National Language. The teaching of the National Language through Radio and Television will in future be designed to hold the interest of the beginners so that they will find language-learning a more rewarding and pleasurable adventure.

I would like to congratulate the Main and the Working Committees of the Singapore National Language Month for their fine effort in making the campaign a success. Now I have great pleasure in declaring the Second National Language Month for 1965 open.

12th November, 1965

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