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Singapore Government Press Statement

Mo. Se. 32/66 (CUL)

Speech by the Minister for Culture and Social Affairs, Eneke Othman Wok, on the occasion of the opening of the fountain at Tanglin Circus on Monday, 26th September, 1966 at 8.00 p.m.

I am very happy to be able to attend the opening ceremony for the Tanglin Circus Fountain which is the third of the series of giant fountains to be commissioned this year.

As everybody knows, the basic target of the Government since 1959 has been national development at all levels which means the deploying of the resources of the country for various purposes.

What are to be developed, how the resources are to be developed, and what are the purposes of development are all very pertinent questions which leave room for variation from country to country, depending largely on the character of the people and the leadership.

If we are to sustain and even accelerate the present standard of living and to give meaning to the "decade of development", we cannot allow any slow-down in the developing momentum, be it homes for people, public buildings, community centres or schools. But in urban progress, we must guard against overcrowding in which the city simply becomes a maze of tall buildings. One of the remedies against "ribbon development" is sensible provision for "green lungs" such as parks and fountains.

In national development, as in the development of the individual, care must be taken to ensure all-round development. But in devoting the bulk of our resources on providing material amenities, we must never lose sight of the necessity for promoting the cultural and aesthetic aspects of life. The essential aim in building these fountains is to make our city a more beautiful place to live in so that our citizens can go for evening strolls in their leisure hours, and looking up these gushing fountains be reminded of Man's progressive and creative spirit and in this way be inspired into contributing their own talents for a better society.

Collectively the fountains in our City area can also serve as a test for national "maturity" among our people. In many newly independent countries, the people have not yet been educated to respect public property which after all, belong to the people. This is indeed regrettable. I am glad to note that the large

majority of our people in the Republic are responsible and public conscious citizens, although vandalism is not totally absent in our society. This is where the lately introduced Ordinance comes in and I have no doubt these fountains will permanently remain not only for our own people but also for the increasing number of tourists who find Singapore a place abounding with attractions.

I hope that Tanglin Circus will be a source of relaxation for our citizens and now I have great pleasure in declaring the fountain open.

September 26, 1966.

Time issued: 1630 hours
