

22/71

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC:002/9/71(H.A.)

SPEECH BY PROF. WONG LIN KEN, MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS
AND M.P. FOR ALEXANDRA, AT OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
BAHARUDDIN VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE ON FRIDAY, 8TH OCTOBER
1971, AT 7.15 P.M.

We are gathered here tonight to witness the official opening of the Baharuddin Vocational Institute. Our Republic has witnessed the official opening of many a school and vocational training centre in the last 10 years. The opening of this Institute stands apart from all the others because the Baharuddin Vocational Institute is unique in several ways. First, it is the only Vocational Institute in Singapore that provides training in manual and applied arts and printing. The reason for this Institute is that we have reached that stage of industrialisation requiring greater focus on design, product presentation, packing, advertising, display and the development of the printing industry. The graduates from this Institute will be equipped to further our industrial progress and, generally, contribute to the cultural and social life of the Republic. This Institute has already functioned for 2 years, and, during this time, it has already acquired a reputation through the successes of its students and teachers in various national competitions for best handicrafts and designs.

The other unique feature of the Baharuddin Vocational Institute is that it works closely with industries, the Tourist Promotion Board, the Singapore Manufacturers' Association, and the Light Industries Services of the Economic Development Board. This is to ensure that the training in the Institute will be tailored to the actual needs of the economy. In this way, our Republic will some day be able to depend entirely on our own designers and craftsmen in the field of advertising, handicraft souvenir, fashion, woodworking and printing trades.

One aspect of this close relationship between training and industries is the industrial attachment and in-plant training scheme. Under this scheme, student trainees work with workers in the production line, so that they learn skills in the environment in which they must finally earn their living. This scheme provides the trainees with experience in actual conditions of work, and their prospective employers with an idea of their potential ability.

Another scheme now being introduced is the training of student and workers sent by firms to meet the specific needs of particular firms. These firms bear the cost of training their future employees.

The Baharuddin Vocational Institute is also unique in that it is a multi-national effort. Nearly 40% of the staff has been trained abroad, under various schemes supported by Australia, Canada, France, India, Japan and the United States of America, mentioned in alphabetical order of precedence. Under the United Kingdom Special Aid, the British Government provided the financial assistance for the building of this complex and equipment for most of the courses.

Of special importance tonight, is the official handing over of the equipment of the printing school. You have just witnessed this ceremony. This printing school has been made possible by the generosity of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The contribution consists of a donation of \$3½ million worth of machinery, equipment and the provision of expert services and training fellowships for the establishment of the Printing School. By this single act of generosity, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has made possible the emergence of one of the best printing schools in South East Asia. The impact of this Printing School will be far-reaching in our society. It has been aptly said that the pen is mightier than the sword. But the might of the pen will be limited in impact without the printed word. Any development that makes it possible for the printed word to reach the largest possible number of people is a welcome contribution. Professor Hans Leussink, on behalf of the Government of Singapore, I convey our thanks to you, for personally gracing this occasion, and to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the donation of the Printing School.

Our thanks also go to the British Government for its contribution under the Special Aid Scheme. The Baharuddin Vocational Institute is one of the many concrete tributes to the British that when they liquidate their responsibilities they work together with the Singapore Government for the benefit of the Republic.

Our thanks also go to all the other governments that have made this multi-national effort possible. Lastly, our thanks to the local firms associated with the development of this Institute, especially East Asiatic Co. Ltd., I.C.I. (Singapore) Pte. Ltd., Behn, Meyer & Co. (Pte) Ltd.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in declaring the Baharuddin Vocational Institute open.

DATE: 8th October, 1971.

Time issued: 1400 hours.