

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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06-1/93/12/03**SPEECH BY MR LEE YOCK SUAN, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION,
AT HWA CHONG JUNIOR COLLEGE'S OFFICIAL OPENING OF
ITS REDEVELOPED CAMPUS ON 3 DECEMBER 1993 AT 7.00 PM**

I am happy to be here for the Official Opening of Hwa Chong's Redeveloped Campus. Thank you for your warm welcome.

Hwa Chong Junior College has managed to maintain its high standard of education even though it had to function in temporary premises for about four years. I am sure the staff and students are proud of this achievement and happy to be back at this permanent location. This new campus has much to offer with its improved facilities like the science project rooms, a greenhouse for biotechnology, a music room, additional lecture theatres, a dance room and an Olympic-sized swimming pool. These facilities and the College's programmes are some of the factors that help to make a successful college.

A good college capitalises on the strengths and expertise of its staff and makes efficient use of its facilities to design programmes that stretch the abilities of its students. This also involves a careful study of its student profile. It is well known that Hwa Chong attracts students of a certain calibre. Given the quality of the intake every year, the expectations of the school leadership, teachers and students of Hwa Chong are therefore much higher. Competition is keener as the demands to add value and to meet new challenges become higher.

Competition is stimulating. However, students must be aware of their own abilities and limitations when choosing a junior college for themselves. They must make realistic choices.

To help students and their parents make informed choices, my Ministry provides a range of performance indicators based on the GCE 'A' level results of our 14 junior colleges. You can read more about them in the newspapers this coming Sunday. Remember though, that in assessing a junior college, you must weigh the quality of the student intake as against its performance at the end of two years in the college. A college must therefore be graded on its own merit, based on its ability to add value and enhance the performance of its students for a given quality of intake.

All our colleges provide students with every opportunity to develop their inherent talents and strengths. Every college has its own ethos and mission and caters to students with differing abilities. Physical facilities alone do not produce good results. Our colleges have therefore developed various academic and extra-curricular programmes to meet the needs of their students.

Our students have generally performed well in the 'A' levels across the different colleges as compared to about 500 independent schools in the United Kingdom (UK) which tend to attract their better students. A comparison based on 1991 results showed that about 56 per cent of the answer scripts submitted by our Junior College (JC) students scored A or B grades as compared to the average of 42 per cent for the UK independent schools. If our top JCs are ranked with the 500 independent schools in the UK, Raffles JC would rank third and Hwa Chong, National and Victoria JCs would all roughly be in the sixth position.

The staff and students of Hwa Chong must be happy to hear this. I congratulate the college on its achievements. You have produced many President's scholars and award winners in the international Science and Mathematics Olympiads. You are also known for your strength in games such as volleyball and table-tennis. I hope you will continue to provide the all-round education and maintain the discipline that you are known for.

I am pleased also to note that Hwa Chong is providing scholarships to enable more bright students to study at the college. With its constant efforts to improve further, I am confident that Hwa Chong will continue to make a substantial contribution to the education of young Singaporeans.

My best wishes to all of you and I hope that you will attain greater heights of achievement in your new campus.

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