

27 JAN 1993

93 - Js - 1

Release No.: 13/JAN  
11-1/93/01/14

**SPEECH BY PROFESSOR S JAYAKUMAR, MINISTER FOR LAW AND  
HOME AFFAIRS AND CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SINDA,  
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE SINDA MILLION DOLLAR DRAW  
ON THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 1993, AT 5.28 PM  
AT THE SHANGRI-LA BALLROOM**

Mr President

Ladies and Gentlemen

First, let me thank you all for coming to this ceremony to mark the launching of the SINDA Million Dollar Donation Draw, and in particular, to express our deepfelt appreciation to our Guest-of-Honour, President Wee Kim Wee for agreeing to launch the draw.

2 It has been little more than a year and a half since the Action Committee on Indian Education (ACIE) published its report on the educational underperformance of Indian-Singaporean students. The ACIE's documentation of the nature and extent of the underperformance, and its diagnosis of the underlying causative factors, jolted the Indian community. We were concerned and wanted to act. The Committee's recommendations became SINDA's agenda of action.

3 SINDA's mission is to build a well-educated, confident and resilient community of Indians who stand together with the other communities in contributing to the progress of multi-racial Singapore. SINDA's guiding philosophy is that education is the surest path to upliftment in our meritocratic society. But education must be complemented by the ballast of the family. If a child's educational improvement is to be durable, there must be reinforcement from supportive parents and a conducive family environment. That is why SINDA's programmes have been initiated along two fronts - education, aimed at students, and welfare, aimed at parents, families and the community.

4 1992 was the first complete year of operations for SINDA. It was an eventful one, with the launch of numerous programmes and activities. A dedicated and industrious corps of volunteers, broad-based support from the community, and a lean but effective full-time Secretariat, have been the key reasons for this promising start.

5 Although little more than a year old, several indicators suggest that SINDA is on the right track.

- More than 2500 students enrolled in SINDA's islandwide remedial tuition programme
- More than 7000 parents and children participated in outreach activities held at community centres
- SINDA's Family Service Centre has served more than 120 people since its establishment in July last year
- SINDA has 500 volunteers and a further 500 paid-helpers involved in its programmes
- Nine out of 10 working Indians make monthly donations to SINDA via the CPF check-off scheme

6 These are encouraging indicators. They attest to the scale and reach of SINDA's programmes. But the more important question is whether the programmes have been effective.

7 I am often asked: how successful is SINDA? How effective are our programmes. We must remind ourselves that we have embarked on a long and arduous process of social change. It is a long-haul effort especially when it entails a re-orientation of the basic attitudes.

8 We do not expect overnight success. It is also difficult to ascertain the success of community action programmes, such as SINDA, in the short term.

9 I am glad to inform you, however, that there are already signs of some improvement on the education front.

10 In the 1992 PSLE examinations, the overall pass rate of Indian-Singaporean students was 86.3% - an increase of 5 percentage points from the 1991 figure of 81.3%. In comparison, the national pass rate rose from 89.8% to 91.2%.

11 The pass rate in Science rose by 6.3 percentage points from 82.6% in 1991 to 88.9% in 1992. For Mathematics, however, the improvement was marginal - from 55.9% to 56.3%. The pass rate for English rose by 2.3 points to 95.0%. The second language pass rate continues to be high at 95.5% although there was a fluctuation and there was a drop of 1.4 points. It is also interesting to note that a higher proportion of Indian students, 42%, were streamed to the Special/Express courses in 1992 compared to 37% in 1991.

12 This general improvement in pass rates is promising and should encourage us to press on with our collective effort to arrest and reverse the decline in educational standards. However, we must be cautious. We must not be complacent and not let it become the proverbial "flash in the pan". These are early days still. As the results for Mathematics show, we have a long way to go.

13 The first positive steps have been taken towards our goal. The community must consolidate and build upon such early achievements. There may be the occasional setback or failure, but it must never deter us from the resolute pursuit of the educational and social upliftment of Singapore's Indian community. SINDA, and the Indian community, must redouble the effort to make this lasting contribution.

14 Greater effort of course requires greater resources. The purpose of the SINDA Million Dollar Draw is to raise a net \$2 million for the SINDA Endowment Fund. It is a major project that needs the support of all Singaporeans.

15 I am told that many individuals and corporations have come forward to sponsor the prizes for the draw. I am happy to note that about half of these sponsors are non-Indians. All self-help groups need such inter-community support if they are to succeed in their mission to contribute to the progress of Singapore by helping the weak and disadvantaged within their respective communities.

16 I now urge all of you, corporate chiefs and grassroots leaders alike, to give the SINDA Million Dollar Donation Draw your full support. We hope that you will support SINDA by promoting the sale of tickets through your organisations and associations. For the small sum of \$2, each buyer will not only stand the chance of winning an attractive prize, but also derive the satisfaction of doing his or her bit for a worthwhile cause.

17 In conclusion, I would like to thank President Wee Kim Wee, for kindly gracing this occasion, the volunteers who have helped organise the Donation Draw and this launch ceremony and all of you for your presence and support.

\*\*\*\*\*

From: INFORMATION5 (8812:GVT224)  
Subject: [Launch of SINDA Million Dollar Draw]  
Posted: Fri 15-January-93 10:30 SING  
Delivered: Fri 15-January-93 10:30 SING (59 lines)  
Msg ID: IPM-8812-930115-945605250

**SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASES**

**DISTRIBUTION LIST**

1	Mr Yatiman Bin Yusof, Parliamentary Secretary (Foreign Affairs)	GVT 047
2	Mr Lim Boon Heng, Senior Minister of State (MTI)	GVT 090
3	Dr Yeo Ning Hong, Minister for Defence	GVT 200
4	Mr Ch'ng Jit Koon, Senior Minister of State (Community Development)	GVT 234
5	Dr Ahmad Mattar, Minister for Environment	GVT 080
6	BG George Yeo, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs	GVT 049
7	Mr Harun A Ghani, Political Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs	GVT 710
8	Library Officer, Auditor-General Office	GVT 370
9	Library. Ministry of Education	GVT 036
10	Mr Lee Chiong Giam, Chief Executive Director (PA)	GVT 615
10a	Mr Soon Low Boon, Library (PA)	
11	Library, Parliament House	GVT 251
12	National Archives	GVT 237
13	Mr Aziz Champion, Ministry of Law (PS's copy)	GVT 125
14	Budget Division, Ministry of Finance	GVT 052
15	Mrs Elaine Swinn-Tan, Head, Public Relations, MOL	GVT 168
16	Economics Dept, MAS	GVT 721
17	PSD, Ministry of Finance	GVT 111
18	The General Manager, Board of Commissioners of Currency	GVT 611
19	Library, Ministry of Community Development	GVT 235
20	Commissioner for Lands, Land Office, Ministry of Law	GVT 463

21	Library, Jurong Town Corporation	GVT 390
22	Public Relations Dept, Ministry of Home Affairs	GVT 137
23	Resource Centre, Ministry of Trade & Industry	GVT 091
24	Public Relations Dept, VITB	GVT 480
25	Registry Supervisor, Ministry of National Development	GVT 240
26	The Chairman, Singapore Institute of Standards and Industrial Research	GVT 325
27	Librarian, NTUC Research Unit	GVT 351
27a	PA to Mr Ong Teng Cheong, Deputy Prime Minister	
28	Mindef Library	GVT 207
29	Director, Community Relations Dept, Ministry of Community Development (Kindly make copies and distribute to all the secretariats)	GVT 470
30	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence	GVT 560
31	Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Labour & Second Minister for Defence	GVT 205
32	Dr Tay Eng Soon, Senior Minister of State for Education	GVT 030
33	Mr Wong Kan Seng, Minister for Foreign Affairs	GVT 044
33a	Mr Peter Ho, DS (SEA) Min. of Foreign Affairs	GVT 044
34	Dr Richard Hu, Minister for Finance	GVT 017
35	Mr Yeo Cheow Tong, Minister for Health & Minister for Community Development	GVT 172 GVT 230
36	Mr Sidek Bin Saniff, Minister of State for Education	GVT 680
37	Mr J. A. Nathan, Globalink, TDB	GVT 817