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SPEECH BY MR TANG GUAN SENG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(EDUCATION), AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF
THE TEACHERS' ART EXHIBITION AT NATIONAL MUSEUM ART GALLERY
ON TUESDAY, 29 APRIL 1986 AT 5.30 PM

Just a few weeks ago our Acting Minister for Community Development, Mr Wong Kan Seng, spoke about our government's intention to build new cultural facilities such as a fine arts museum. Our First Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Goh Chok Tong, also announced last week that a cultural centre will be built under Phase Three of the development project for an indoor stadium in Kallang. These are clear manifestations of the government's efforts to promote the arts. Hopefully, the provision of these and other similar facilities will enhance the development of Singapore into a culturally vibrant society.

It is a fact that amongst our good students, more are opting for the Science Course rather than the Arts Course. This is quite natural in our context. To make a living in our resource-scarce Republic, it is desirable that our students acquire some knowledge of technology and skills. However, we should not allow economic and technological advancement to hamper our cultural progress, rather, these should go hand-in-hand with an appreciation of the arts and culture.

Fortunately, the recent years saw greater interest in the fine arts; in music and dance, drama and a host of other cultural pursuits. The better attendances at the various exhibitions and performances attest to the need for more cultural activities.

The government hopes to promote appreciation and creativity in the arts. As part of its desire to provide a qualitative art education, the Art syllabuses were revised in 1983 and since then, they have been implemented by stages to provide schools with more interesting and challenging Art programmes.

The Ministry of Education has also introduced the Art Elective Programmes in a few schools. It is hoped that both the general and Elective Programmes of Art, provide a good balance and a more rounded education for our children in schools.

Art is now better taught in schools. More Art teachers have upgraded their teaching skills through in-service courses organised by the Ministry of Education at various training institutions like the Institute of Education, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Baharuddin Vocational Institute.

I am happy to learn that our teachers have the empathy towards the Art subject. With more and better trained Art teachers, and very supportive principals, Art has carved a niche in the school curriculum.

After you have viewed the exhibits, you will, I am sure, agree with me that they are not lacking in variety of media or styles. I hope that this exhibition will be an inspiration to the students under their charge.

This exhibition is the result of a concerted effort of a core of very interested people comprising the art teachers, principals and officers from the Ministry of Education and CDIS, as well as lecturers from the Institute of Education.

I would like to congratulate all of you for putting up such an impressive show and for a job well done.

I now take great pleasure in declaring this Art Exhibition open. @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
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