

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR TANG GUAN SENG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(EDUCATION), AT THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF TUAN
MONG HIGH SCHOOL ON WEDNESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 1986 AT 9.00 AM

It gives me great pleasure to be with you this morning to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the School. The celebration we share today is a timely occasion for old students of the School to re-affirm old ties and reinforce the School's traditions. On such an occasion, it is also appropriate to take stock of the progress the School has made since its founding 80 years ago.

Tuan Mong High School began as the Singapore Tuan Mong Teochew Public School. It was founded by a group of businessmen of the Teochew Community on 1 Oct 1906. Since then, the School has progressed and developed a distinctive character with many fine traditions which it can justly be proud of.

Tuan Mong High School owes its progress and success to the various school management committees which have provided it with financial and moral support. This is because the various school management committees have been cognizant of the important role they could play in the education of our young. They have actively involved themselves in the affairs of the School and have continuously provided it with the necessary financial assistance and encouragement.

Community involvement in education is traditional in Singapore. In the olden days, the older generation, especially the successful businessmen, came readily forward to extend financial support to the schools. Those who were not wealthy would contribute in effort and moral support. During that era, the many schools which were set up by civic-minded citizens, helped uplift our educational levels.

How does the Singaporean today view his or her responsibility in education? Being parents, it is no doubt that they place great emphasis on the education of their children. Being citizens, have they done enough? From the efforts put in by Citizens' Consultative Committees, Community Centre Management Committees, Trade Unions, Clan Associations, School Management Committees and School Advisory Committees in raising funds for scholarships and bursaries, I am convinced that the traditional spirit of the older generation still remains.

However, there is a disturbing trend among some of our younger people which is worth noting. To them, they feel that their responsibility as a citizen ends with their paying of taxes. They assume that education is the sole responsibility of the Government. They fail to realise that although education is heavily subsidized by the Government, the need for community involvement cannot be over emphasized.

It is my hope that young Singaporeans, will emulate their predecessors and come forward to provide moral and financial support and to work together with the schools in the realisation of the goals set for the education of our future citizens.

I am sure that Tuan Mong High School is proud of the many successful past students it has produced. It is gratifying to know that many of them are successful and outstanding businessmen and professionals who are rendering immense service to our country. There are also others, who

in their simple, unassuming and modest ways, contribute their share in the building of our Nation. In short, the School has produced students who have become worthy citizens of Singapore. I am sure those who have passed through its portals will cherish the period they spent in their Alma Mater.

On this auspicious occasion, it is not only heartening to look back on past achievements but also interesting to look ahead. I have no doubt that Tuan Mong High School will not rest on its contributions and achievements but will continue to press on and aspire to reach greater heights in its role of developing young citizens. May all who are in the School continue to work diligently and strive for excellence in all their endeavours.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the prize-winners and the School on their achievements and wish all of you many more fruitful years ahead.

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