



SPEECH ORIGINALLY DELIVERED IN MALAY

SPEECH FOR MR ZAQY MOHAMAD, CHAIRMAN, BULAN BAHASA 2015, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE MALAY LANGUAGE MONTH 2015, SATURDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 3.00PM, AT THE FLOWER FIELD HALL, GARDENS BY THE BAY

Kumpul kuini barang sebakul,
Hiris sebiji manis dirasa;
Di taman ini kita berkumpul
Meraikan bersama Bulan Bahasa

Prime Minister, Mr Lee Hsien Loong.

Mr Masagos Zulkifli Masagos Mohamad, Minister, Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chairman, Malay Language Council Singapore.

Pehin Hazair Abdullah, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Brunei

Distinguished Guests and friends from Brunei, Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very warm welcome to the launch of Bulan Bahasa 2015.

I believe we are all here because we know the value of our mother tongue and have a passionate desire to see it preserved and passed on to the future generations.

Thank you Prime Minister for giving the Malay language high recognition when opening your NDR speech. While you always begin with the Malay language, something you said touched the hearts of many. Our Dutas and I have a What's App group and it went abuzz almost immediately. PM,



you started with the line ‘Please allow me to begin with the National Language’ which made many of us proud. It filled many of us native Malay speakers with pride.

Many of you here have led or been involved in building Bulan Bahasa to where we are today. I would like to acknowledge our past chairmen, Mr Sidek Sanif and Mr Yatiman Yusof for their vision and dedication in leading Majlis Bahasa.

I am also grateful to Mr Hawazi Daipi and Mr Masagos Zukifli for entrusting me with Bulan Bahasa over the last three years. We are able to dream bigger, better and bolder because of the solid foundations you have established over the past 27 years. With your strong support and encouragement, Bulan Bahasa has grown from strength to strength.

As part of SG50, we are celebrating Bulan Bahasa at Gardens by the Bay, an internationally acclaimed venue that is reflective of Singapore’s progress in the past 50 years. Today we are also launching *Yang Terukir – Bahasa dan Persuratan Melayu Sempena 50 tahun Kemerdekaan Singapura*” (Malay Language and Literature in conjunction with 50 years of Singapore’s Independence), an initiative led by Prof Hadijah Rahmat. The book is timely and significant as it captures the spirit and contribution of our community. It also acts as an important historical record of Singapore’s Malay literary and cultural heritage.

Our literary and Bulan Bahasa pioneers like Cikgu Muhammad Ariff Ahmad, Cikgu Ma’amun Suheimi, Cikgu Masran Sabran, Cikgu Suratman Markasan have dedicated their life to ensure that Bahasa Melayu remains relevant and dynamic. Our evergreen Bulan Bahasa signature tune ‘menjunjung budaya’ writted by Cikgu Abdolah Lamat is timeless and a passionate reminder to love our language and preserve our culture. Thank you all for being an inspiration.

This year, we have 105 programmes from 50 partners of which 8 are new. Our MAECs are participating in a big way. A total of 14 MAECs have specially created programmes for their community centres and clubs. Nee Soon and Chua Chu Kang will be joining Tampines and Jurong in creating their very own Bulan Bahasa at their GRCs.



49 Schools and four Madrasahs are actively supporting us through programmes and outreach. Mediacorp is streaming our official launch LIVE as I speak. And for the first time buses are carrying the Bulan Bahasa message throughout Singapore, courtesy of ComforDelgro.

Our Duta Bahasa play a key role in keeping our language alive. Outside of your public personas, we know that you have also been quietly, behind the scenes, nurturing a love for the language. Thank you for your contribution. I am delighted to introduce this year's Duta Bahasa - Datuk Ramli Sarip, Nur Hafiza Osman, Hairianto Diman and Siti Aisyah Mohamed Salim. Welcome to our Duta family.

In closing, I would like to thank a few individuals and supporters who have contributed much to the success of Bulan Bahasa 2015.

First of all, thank you to Mr Masagos Zulkfli, Chairman of Majlis Bahasa, Professor Faishal Ibrahim, Chairman of Majlis Bahasa SG50 and all Members of the Council, for your strong support.

Secondly, my sincere appreciation goes to all members of my Bulan Bahasa Committee who have given selflessly of your time and effort. . .

I would also like to make a special mention of the late Cikgu Naim. Cikgu was undoubtedly one of Bulan Bahasa's biggest supporters. He was always ready to share his knowledge of the language and made it a point to attend and support us on all our initiatives. His pantun, peribahasa, and language resources are actively being used and continue to inspire us to carry on his legacy.

A special thanks to Gardens by the Bay for sharing this beautiful space with us and all our visitors to the Bulan Bahasa launch weekend.

And last but not least, thank you everyone for being here with us.

Thank you.