

SPEECH BY MS LIM SAU HOONG, CHAIRPERSON OF PROMOTE MANDARIN COUNCIL, AT THE 31st ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPEAK MANDARIN CAMPAIGN ON 6 JULY 2010, 11.00 A.M. AT ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM.

Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Manpower,

Mr Sam Tan, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Information and the Arts,

Mr Chen Jiang, Cultural Counsellor, Embassy of the People's Republic of China,

Members of Parliament,

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

1. It is my pleasure to be here today as the Speak Mandarin Campaign enters its 31st year. The Promote Mandarin Council will continue to further our efforts based on the direction we set out last year.

2. In addition to stressing the importance of the Chinese language, we also hope to nurture Singaporeans' appreciation of the Chinese culture. In time, it is our desire that Chinese Singaporeans are distinguished as both effectively bilingual and bi-cultural.

3. As we encourage Chinese Singaporeans to speak more Mandarin, we would also like to draw their focus towards speaking the language well. And it is in our opinion that to speak the language well, it helps to have a better understanding for the culture.

4. The Chinese Challenge 2009 was a highly visible project, launched with Business China and the Chinese Language and Culture Fund. It raised the public's affinity for the Chinese language and culture by way of a nationwide contest. And in doing so, The Chinese Challenge lends itself as a wider platform to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to speak more Mandarin.

5. Last year, the Grand Final, which was broadcasted on Channel 8, attracted close to 900,000 viewers and clinched the Best Variety Special at MediaCorp's Star Awards 2009.

6. This year, we will work to build upon the momentum with The Chinese Challenge 2010 through a 6-week nationwide contest. Similar to last year, the top scorers will again be selected to compete on a televised Grand Final.

7. Through the content of The Chinese Challenge, we hope that in years to come, we will be able to build a Chinese knowledge database for everyone who is interested to learn more about the Chinese language and culture.

8. We humbly ask for your continued support in building this future for our community. Thank you.

一年一度的讲华语运动又来了。回顾过去,不尽唏嘘,展望未来,路途仍然遥远。在当下的大环境里,鼓励国人真诚学习华文华语肯定是当务之急,我就不须在此赘述。

其实,学好语文,取决于心态。今年,我们再次为大家呈献“华文? 谁怕谁!”的一系列活动,就是希望鼓励大家再一次重新思考这个课题。我们去年推出的“华文? 谁怕谁!”,取得了非常理想的成绩,不但参赛数目远超预定目标,整体口碑也非常好,但更重要的是,我们为国人展示了语文文化本身的魅力,让学习华语华文回归最真实的动机,让学习变得更有趣、更实在和更具意义。相信我们的真诚意愿是大家看得到的。鉴于“华文? 谁怕谁!”活动本身可做为永续发展的经营方式,我们深信若能年复一年、持之以恒地继续推动这个项目,假以时日,肯定会看到细水长流和潜移默化后的成效。

在这里,我要感谢我们理事会和秘书处全体伙伴的任劳任怨。这段日子大家辛苦了。我更要感谢 **Tote Board**、通商中国、中华语文文学基金、**CapitaLand**及亚洲文明博物馆等合作伙伴,在这非常时刻慷慨解囊与鼎力相助,未来的长期合作更是我们所乐见其成的。除此,更要感谢去年在我们决赛电视节目里卯足全力、粉墨登场的议员部长们。你们的表演令大家惊艳赞赏。对了,不晓得颜金勇部长今年是否有意愿要挑战自己,表演高难度的胸口碎大石或钢牙拉卡车? 且让我们拭目以待。

在今年较小规模的活动中,我们除了推出一系列的多媒体互动游戏外,也还是徇众要求,安排了精彩的总决赛电视节目。除此,我们也再推出大家熟悉的小朋友们学习华语的广告小品。现在,就请大家一起重温这些广告。(play commercials)

以上片子,让我们看到来自世界各地的孩子们信心满满地学习华文的愉悦态度和兴趣,这可能是来自于教材的多样与教育方法的活泼,也更应是来自有远见的父母背后的支持与鼓励。

我想,在不久的将来,在华人的世界里,包括中港台等地,很多年轻小朋友都能同时掌握流利的英语与华语,而在西方世界里,学习华文华语的年轻人也将越来越多。这些年轻一代都能同时拥有东方西方的文化精华与资讯优势,获得更优越的工作机会,当然,也更能遨游自如地驰骋在东西方的世界。所以我相信,掌握双语双文化只不过是孩子们在未来的国际舞台上较劲的最普通技能。

在讲华语运动迈入第三十一个年头的当儿,我们再次呼吁大家能正视学习华文华语的宏观意义,更能考量学习华文华语的深层内涵。但愿大家继续努力,永不放弃。谢谢。

[称呼:人力部长颜金勇先生、通讯及艺术部政务次长陈振泉先生、中国驻新加坡大使馆文化参赞陈疆先生、各位国会议员]

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