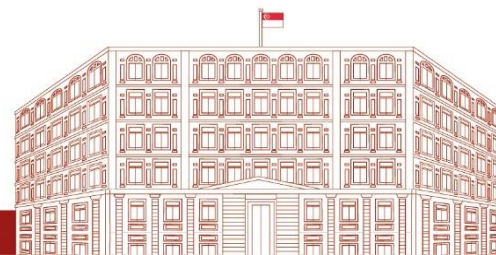


**Final Transcript of Speech by Josephine Teo, Minister for Communications and Information,
at the Anugerah Persuratan Awards 2023 on 11th November 2023**

1. I am not proficient in Malay, but I can hear for myself what a beautiful language it is.
2. Let me begin with a simple greeting in Malay. Salam sejahtera kepada anda semua. Saya amat gembira dapat bersama anda pagi ini. [EL Translation: Greetings to all of you. I'm very happy to be with you this morning].
3. I understand that it means it is my pleasure to be here with Singapore's esteemed Malay literary luminaries at the Anugerah Persuratan 2023 Awards Ceremony.
4. Since 1993 - that is for the past 30 years – the MBMS has been organising this Award tirelessly, year after year, in recognition of outstanding literary works by Singaporean writers, who have contributed to our Malay language and literary landscape.
5. In addition to the Anugerah Persuratan, the MBMS also organises the Bulan Bahasa (Malay Language Month) annually, and helms Singapore's membership at Mastera, the Southeast Asian Literature Council.
6. These efforts reflect the MBMS' unwavering commitment to cultivate the appreciation for the Malay language and literature, and to nurture a creative environment that is conducive for Singapore writers to produce enduring masterpieces that will resonate with generations to come.
7. The Malay language is deeply intertwined with Singapore's journey as a nation. It holds significant historical and cultural value for Singapore and reflects our multicultural heritage. We all know instinctively it was absent that it was something that we will feel like a gaping hole in our society.
8. Till today, the Malay language has remained a key element of our Malay community's cultural heritage. It is a language of community and kinship, and through its adaptation and evolution, maintains its relevance to society. It also plays a crucial role in upholding Singapore's cultural diversity and social cohesion.



9. I commend the MBMS for their dedication and commitment to sustaining and elevating the Award. Because of your relentless efforts, you have encouraged and nurtured more writers to publish quality literary works in Malay and promoted Malay literary arts for Singaporeans to appreciate.
10. Past recipients of Hadiah Sastera (Literary Awards) and the Anugerah Harapan (Promising Award) like Mr. Farihan Bahron, continue to write, inspire, and contribute to the literary community through their tutelage of aspiring writers.
11. This year, Mr Farihan Bahron was honoured with the Young Writers Award, presented by Mastera Indonesia.
12. It is important that our established writers continue to encourage and guide emerging writers in their pursuits of literary excellence. Our Tun Seri Lanang award recipients personify this commitment to excel in Malay literature.
13. Their outstanding works, coupled with a genuine eagerness to guide emerging writers, have nurtured a flourishing community of literary minds.
14. Mr. Hamed Ismail and Mr. Jamal Ismail are stalwarts in the mentorship of emerging writers. Their influence ripples through the literary landscape. We eagerly anticipate further exceptional works from these awardees, their protégés and mentees.
15. In conclusion, I would like to congratulate all our award recipients and winners today for your excellent contributions as writers and language activists, in our Malay literary scene.
16. I have every confidence that you will continue to be role models who will inspire other Singaporean writers and readers.
17. Tahniah diucapkan kepada semua! Semoga anda terus berkarya. [EL Translation: Congratulations to all! Carry on writing.]
18. On that note, terima kasih. [EL Translation: Thank you]

