



**SPEECH FOR MR ZAQY MOHAMAD, CHAIRMAN, MALAY LANGUAGE MONTH 2013 AT THE MALAY LANGUAGE MONTH 2013 LAUNCH, SATURDAY, 7 SEPT, 2.50 PM AT THE RIVER ROOM, ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM**

<Pantun in Malay>

*Ibarat si logam perak berharga,  
Putih jernih luar biasa,  
Menghias kata santun dijaga,  
Warisan temurun anak bangsa.*

<Translated into English>

Like a silver precious metal,  
Unusually clear white,  
Using a language preserves its graciousness,  
To be inherited by the generation after.

Welcome to the launch of Malay Language Month 2013.

Mr Lawrence Wong, Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth.

Mr Masagos Zulkifli Masagos Mohamad, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chairman, Malay Language Council Singapore.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Malay Language Month is one of the most important efforts in promoting the Malay language in the country.

Last year, the campaign received a lot of constructive feedback from the public. This has greatly motivated me to do even better for this year's Malay Language Month.

In this regard, the Malay Language Month 2013 will feature a series of engaging activities all related to the Malay Language. These activities will be held across a span of two exciting days at the Asian Civilisations Museum.



In fact, interesting activities such as hip hop performances, *silat* demonstrations, an exhibition of artefacts, a *pantun* challenge and a football match will be complemented by a variety of community events held at different heartland locations in Singapore for the rest of the month. All this is in alignment with the theme of the Malay Language Month 2013 which is “*Ilmu, Budaya and Mesra*”.

Dear all,

The Malay Language Month 2013 invites us to use the Malay language to acquire and share knowledge. It also seeks to convey the graciousness of the Malay culture. This is reflected in the themes chosen for this year’s campaign – language as knowledge, language as culture and language in building relationships. Hence, the Malay language as ‘*Ilmu, Budaya, Mesra*’ highlights the importance of the Malay language within us, as well as in all of our lives.

I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the spirit and enthusiasm of all the organisers and volunteers of the Malay Language Month. For this year’s campaign, they have worked tirelessly with one another behind the scenes to produce quality programmes for the community. This is what is meant by the saying ‘by the community, for the community’. Let’s give a round of applause to the members and volunteers of Malay Language Month 2013.

This is the spirit of mutual cooperation upheld in championing and sustaining the use of the Malay language in Singapore. I hope this spirit will remain strong.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank a few individuals and supporters who have ensured the success of the Malay Language Month 2013.

First of all, thank you to Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Chairman of the Malay Language Council Singapore and all Members of the Council, for supporting me and the members of the Malay Language Month Committee.



Secondly, my sincere appreciation goes out to all members of my committee. Indeed many of them have sacrificed their time and energy – forgoing their sleep, returning home late and attending countless meetings just to ensure everything runs smoothly. In fact, many spent their Sunday morning at Geylang Serai Market; on another occasion, at Jalan Besar Stadium to distribute leaflets for this event. These sacrifices were shouldered for the purpose of preserving our heritage and our Malay language.

A special thanks to the National Heritage Board, especially the Asian Civilisations Museum, for sharing this space for the purpose of launching the Malay Language Month 2013.

Finally, as this speech was opened with a Malay *pantun*, I would like to conclude with five Malay proverbs that symbolize the theme of “*Ilmu, Budaya, Mesra*”.

<Proverbs in Malay>

*Tak lapuk dek hujan, tak lekang dek panas  
Hati gajah sama dilapah, hati kuman sama dicecah,  
Kalau tidak dipecahkan ruyung, manakan dapat sagunya  
Berat sama dipikul, ringan sama dijinjing,  
Jiran sepakat membawa berkat*

<Meaning in English>

Something that does not change, something that remains intact.  
Doing things together, in equal distribution.  
Nothing can be achieved if you do not want to seek meaning behind the struggles.  
Going through everything, good or bad, together.  
Neighbours in agreement bring blessings.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as expressed by the wisdom of these proverbs, may the Malay Language Month continue to prosper, now and in the years to come!

Thank you.