

**Presentation of Grant to The Sarawak United Association of Private  
Chinese Secondary School Management Board  
Speech by Chairman Temenggong Dato Vincent Lau Lee Ming**

Date: 2 May 2019 (Thursday)

Time: 3.00pm

Venue: Chung Hua Middle School No.1, Kuching

Yang Amat Berhormat Ketua Menteri Sarawak

Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg

Yang Berhormat

Datuk Dr Sim Kui Hian, Minister of Local Government & Housing

Dato Sri Michael Manyin Jawong, Minister of Education, Science & Technological Research

Dato Sri Hajjah Fatimah Abdullah, Minister of Welfare, Community Wellbeing, Women, Family & Childhood Development

Datuk Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth & Sports

Datuk Lee Kim Shin, Assistant Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture

Yang Berhormat, Menteri Muda, Ahli-Ahli Yang Berhormat, Ketua-Ketua Jabatan, Ketua-Ketua Masyarakat, Dif-Dif Kehormat, Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan yang saya hormati sekalian,

Salam Ibu per-tiwiku and Good afternoon.

On behalf of the Sarawak United Association of Private Chinese Secondary School, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all and thank you for joining us this afternoon to witness the Presentation of 2019 Education Grant by Sarawak Government to the fourteen Chinese Independent Secondary Schools within the State.

Today, we are privileged to have with us our honourable Chief Minister of Sarawak, Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg to grace this Educational Grant Presentation Ceremony, despite their very hectic schedule and commitment.

I would also like to thank and congratulate the Management Board headed by Dato Richard Wee and the members of Chung Hua Middle School No.1 as well as all who have joint-effortly organized this ceremony.

YAB Datuk Patinggi's presence here today signifies his recognition of vernacular education, particularly the contribution of Chinese education and the shared-role he sees the Chinese Independent Secondary Schools play towards building, progress and development of our nation.

Chinese schools have existed in Malaysia as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Chinese vernacular schools were initially established by the ethnic Chinese with the main intention of providing education to local communities in Chinese language, and a way for the Malaysian Chinese community to preserve their mother tongue.

As of now, outside of China Mainland and Taiwan, Malaysia is the only country that has a complete Chinese education system. Malaysians have the option for their children to start school in a Chinese-medium kindergarten then study all the way up to a Chinese university, regardless of race.

China has undergone an astonishing transformation in a brief span of recent history and is really moving the world in many aspects.

Mandarin Chinese is seen as being of increasing strategic importance, ranging from politics, science, social to economy. Even the previous American president Barack Obama and Mark Zuckerberg from Facebook have picked up Chinese.

With China's booming economy, more parents, both Chinese and non-Chinese want their children to learn Mandarin so they can compete for more job opportunities in Chinese or multi-national companies.

According to Education Ministry Statistics for 2018, there are 1,298 Chinese Primary School throughout the country, with a total of 518,543 students.

It is found out that non-ethnic Chinese students comprised over 15% of Chinese primary schools, in other words, approximately 100,000 non-ethnic Chinese students enrolled in Chinese Primary Schools. We expect this number will continue to grow.

Recently Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik announced that Sarawak would become the first state in Malaysia to teach Mathematics and Science in English. The reason for advocating teaching Mathematics and Science in English is aiming at raising the standard of English.

Few people would argue against the importance of English being an international language, especially in today's interconnected world.

It is the lingua franca in cyberspace and in international science, politics, business, and entertainment. It is a plausible move for the Ministry of Education and Sarawak government to work together to improve Malaysian's English literacy and proficiency.

We, however, do not believe by switching the teaching medium of Mathematics and Science will help to uplift the standard of English. Rather it would affect the effectiveness of Mathematics and Science teaching.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization recommends teaching Science and Mathematics in the mother tongue or national language.

The most obvious reason is the success stories of Japan and China, which implemented teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics in their mother tongue.

While I share the concern about the declining standard of English among school children and graduates, I disagree with the implementation of teaching Mathematics and Science in English in Primary Schools, particularly in Chinese Primary Schools.

The majority of students from Chinese Primary Schools will go to National or National type Secondary schools after they finish Primary Six, while only 15-18% go to Chinese Independent Secondary School.

In fact, Chinese independent secondary schools share the same noble objectives of all National (SMK) and National-type (SMJK) secondary schools to provide quality education.

At present, number of non-Chinese studying in Chinese Independent Secondary Schools we must admit it is relatively small.

We, therefore, welcome and encourage more Chinese as well as non-Chinese students from Chinese Primary Schools to enroll in Chinese Independent Secondary School.

As private schools are dependent on the public for the support to fund the school operation, we need to collect school fees. However, for those who enroll in Chinese Independent Secondary Schools and are financially not well off, we do provide various kind of assistance.

Therefore, those who wish to study in Chinese Independent Secondary Schools, especially the non-Chinese, should not be put off because of the school fees imposed.

At this juncture, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to YAB Datuk Patinggi and Sarawak Government for being very supportive all these years and providing continuous financial assistance to the Chinese Independent Secondary Schools in Sarawak.

The annual educational grant by the State Government is an opportune relief to the 14 Chinese Independent Secondary Schools.

In addition, the Chinese Community has been taking upon themselves the responsibility to sustain the Chinese Independent Secondary Schools in Sarawak all these years, and contributing their efforts relentlessly towards the development of Chinese Independent Secondary Schools.

I wish to acknowledge the relentless support and contributions of the Chinese Community as we continue our journey preserving and developing vernacular education as part of academic advancement in the country. I render sincere thanks to you all.

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Now I ask for YAB Datuk Patinggi's indulgence to say a few words in Mandarin.

尊敬的首席部长、各位部长、助理部长、古晋中华第一中学董事主席兼筹委会主席拿督黄良杰、校董、校长、各校董事及代表、各位贵宾、各位关心华教以及支持华教的同道们，先生及女士，

我谨代表砂拉越华文独中董事会联合总会热烈欢迎大家出席今天下午的 2019 年砂州独中拨款移交仪式。特别是向尊敬的砂拉越首席部长拨冗出席这项拨款移交仪式表示感谢。

我也要藉此机会感谢及恭贺以拿督黄良杰为首的古晋一中董事会、教职员工、学生们，以及共同参与筹备安排的华教同道们，成功的举办了今天这项拨款仪式及各项节目。

我们真诚感激首长与州政府一视同仁对待各源流学校，并且认同及肯定华文教育对砂州与国家的贡献，大力支持华文教育的发展。

根据历史记载，19 世纪初，大量中国劳工南下来到马来西亚。基于华人重视教育的特性，便开始建立民办私塾教育子女。华文教育就是在那时候开始萌芽。

发展至今，马来西亚华文教育在东南亚乃至全世界首屈一指，是除中国大陆、台湾、港澳地区以外唯一拥有小学、中学、大专完整华文教育体系的国家。

随着中国迅速的崛起，对世界经济、政治、文化、科技等的影响越来越大，华语在国际的应用也越来越广泛，其应用价值也越来越大，各国人民学华文的人数也越来越多。

在我国，除了华人本身越来越重视母语教育，其他种族也投入华文的学习。全国华小的非华裔学生人数也因此逐年增加，这是非华裔对华文教育的肯定。

根据一份 2018 年的统计报告显示，全国 1298 间华小学生总数约有 52 万名，而非华裔生则占了华小生总数的 15% 以上，即约 10 万名。预测这个数目将会继续增加。

针对教育部长马智礼在与砂拉越首长阿邦佐哈里会面后表示，砂拉越政府已经同意成为首个重启英文教数理的州属，以提升国民的英语水平。

英语作为国际通用语文及科技的重要性不容否认，政府提升英语教育、提升英语水平的主张我非常赞成。只是，我认为，以英语教数理对于提升英语水平不止成效不大，反而还会影响数学及理科的教学成绩。过去政府也曾实施过这项政策，结果并不尽理想。

个人认为在小学阶段还是以母语教数理课为好，毕竟以母语作为教学媒介语的优越性，已获得联合国验证，在中国与日本等国家更是通例。

因此，个人是不赞同在砂拉越的小学，尤其是在华文小学推行英文教数理之教育政策。

也许，待小学生们掌握了扎实的英语能力，在中学阶段再以英语学习数理科，将会更加有成效。

说到中学教育，多数的华小毕业生选择前往国民中学或国民型中学就读，只有15-18%选择报读华文独中。近年来，也出现越来越多的华小毕业生到英文私立学校或国际学校就读的趋势。

华文独立中学，数十年来为不同种族的学子们提供高素质的教育，同时更为国家培养具有多方面竞争优势的精英人才，对国家的建设和发展贡献了很大的力量。

根据2018年6月统计整理来看，目前全国独中有8万多名学生，其中非华裔生只占了1.5%。砂拉越14所独中总学生人数约8000名，其中2.7%为非华裔学生。总的来说，非华裔独中生其实真正不多。

话虽如此，我们应该更积极努力的把学校办好，不断提升华文独中的教师素质、教学水平与学习环境及设备，广招更多的华裔与非华裔学生来报读华文独中。

华文独中由于是民办学校，没有政府的制度化津贴拨款，多年来自力更生。独中的经济来源除了学生所缴付的学费以外，大部分来自董事会、华社及华教同道、校友及学生家长的捐助。由于办学经费不断上涨，使到独中所徵收的学杂费也水涨船高。

我们不希望因为负担不起学费的缘故而令有意报读华文独中的学生们却步。基于培育国家与华社英才的愿景，并帮助独中学生家庭减轻经济负担，我们设立了多项教育补助金及免学费方式来辅助成绩优异、经济需要资助的学生完成学业。

砂州的14所独中的办学经费庞大，感谢首席部长拿督巴丁宜及砂州政府认可华文教育对砂州与国家的贡献，并以行动持续支持华文教育的成长与发展，每年拨款作为辅助经费，减轻了独中经费短缺的困境。

虽然如此，学校仍需要华社各造及华教同道一如既往的帮助与支持，以继续提升教学素质与加强软硬体设备，把学校办得更好。

对于一直鼎力支持着华文教育的各界人士，这些年在华文独中的建设与发展中发挥了积极的作用，我特别在此表达衷心的感谢。

In closing, Yang Amat Berhormat Ketua Menteri, Yang Amat Berbahagia Datin Patinggi, Yang Berhormat-Yang Berhormat Menteri-Menteri dan Menteri Muda, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen, I restate my profound gratefulness to you all for your presence.

Sekian, Terima Kasih.