

**Speech Of**

**Yang Berhormat**

**Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Indera Pahlawan**

**Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Suyoi Bin Haji Osman**

**Minister Of Education**

**In Conjunction With**

**St. Margaret’s School 60th Anniversary Celebration**

**19 Safar 1438 / 19 November 2016, 9.00 Am**

**St. Margaret’s School, Seria**



***Alhamdulillahi Rabbil ‘Alameen, Wassalatu Wassalamu ‘Alaa Asyrafil Mursaleen Sayyidina Muhammadin, Wa’alaa Alihie Wasahbihie Ajmaeen***

Yang Mulia Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Bahrom bin Pengiran Haji Bahar, Deputy Minister of Education;

Yang Mulia Mr. Koh Hong Puah, The Principal of St. Margaret’s School;

Yang Mulia Dr Hajah Romaizah binti Haji Md Salleh, Permanent Secretary (Core Education);

Yang Mulia Dato Seria Paduka Haji Mohd. Jammy bin Hj. Mohd. Shah Al-Islam, The Commissioner of Police;

Madam Dona Bernardine Patrick, The Chairperson of St. Margaret’s School Board of Governors;

Director General of Education, Directors and Senior Officers of the Ministry of Education, Members of The Board of Governors, Members of the Parents – Teachers Association, distinguished guests, Teachers, students, parents, alumni and members of the audience.



And a very good morning.

1. Alhamdulillah, it gives me great pleasure to be with the school on this historical occasion - celebrating achievements and success of St. Margaret’s School.
2. I would like to begin by thanking St. Margaret’s School Board of Governors, the Principal, and the school's 60th Anniversary Celebration Working Committee for inviting me as the guest of Honor and to deliver a speech.
3. I remember, as a young boy growing in Seria, I would sneak into St. Margaret’s School just to meet friends here and of course, in those days, St. Margaret’s School was unlike my own school – AAC. It was always a school to compete with in almost every field.
4. Today we are celebrating everyone here – parents, the school board of governors, staff members and those associated with the school whom, for the benefits of students, work together and give their support. We are also celebrating students on their achievements and development in life. It is also a day for the school’s alumni and friends to come together to see the school’s achievements and what the school may achieve in the future.
5. Today as St. Margaret’s School celebrates the 60th Anniversary of its commencement, its service to the community and its strive for excellence, against all challenges. We can all look back with fond memories how our lives especially those living and growing in Seria, had revolved around St. Margaret’s School. Congratulations and Happy Anniversary St. Margaret’s School.
6. There is a saying in English ‘*mighty oaks from little acorns grow*’ and another saying, ‘*from a small seed, a mighty trunk may grow*’. St. Margaret’s School is a good example of such growth, from a humble beginning, originating from a simple wooden school with just 1 class and 27children to a school with proper building and 1,023 students. In between the past and the present, let us not forget, the many perhaps tens of thousands of students who have passed through its doors over the last 60 years and themselves grown into successful men and women.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The aim of any school is to equip students with not only the education but also the life skills they will need to survive in a fast-changing global world. A challenge for schools and educators at all times will be to educate using the most modern techniques while keeping our core values such as encompassed in our Malay Islamic Monarchy (M.I.B.) philosophy. St. Margaret’s School, I am happy to acknowledge, has remained steadfast in complementing Brunei Darussalam’s education system in providing quality and holistic education.
2. And I congratulate St. Margaret’s School for emerging as one of the top schools in Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Examination for the last 3 consecutive years. On top of that, I was also informed that a number of students from the school had also received the Cambridge Prestigious Award for being ‘Top Ten in the World’ and ‘Top in Brunei Darussalam’.
3. St. Margaret’s School which participates actively in various Co-curriculum Activities had also won many awards in the field, amongst which, the National English Debate Championship, the BELTA National English Oratory competition twice, and the Science Power Point presentation Competitions. The academic and extra-curriculum achievements and awards reflect the quality of education provided by the school. Records by the school also indicate that many students from this school pursue their studies at the higher level.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

1. The Ministry of Education has set a national target for secondary schools to achieve 60 per cent of students obtaining at least 5 O-Level credits by 2017. Many initiatives were introduced at secondary schools at the beginning of the year in order to bring the necessary improvements, including putting a lot of attention on what goes in the classrooms. Teachers have been asked to identify and provide intervention programs tailored to the student’s needs. We also engage parents so that they too can support the work we do with their children. There is indeed a strong evidence to show that children whose parents show a deep interest in their study, tend do well in schools.
2. We will continue to undertake the recommendations and implement policies set out under Sistem Pendidikan Negara Abad 21, that is commonly known as SPN 21, in order to achieve our goal of equipping our students with the 21st Century skill. We need to ensure that our students get the quality education they require to be able to compete in the 21st Century world.
3. Toward achieving our Brunei Vision (or Wawasan Negara 2035), it is not only the government schools that have that responsibility but all educational institutions in this country have to play a role. We appreciate the contribution made by non-government schools, such as St. Margaret’s, in providing quality education to its students, and thus citizens and permanent residents of this country. We hope this partnership and shared responsibility will continue to be the pillars upon which the provision of quality education is built. We also urge the private educational institution to continue to strive for excellence not only in providing their students with quality education but in preparing them for higher studies and also for the demanding job markets. As we strive to achieve our goal in Wawasan 2035 to achieve a higher percentage of our students going for tertiary education, we also want our students to possess the knowledge and skills that are related to the 21st Century. We want our students and the youth of today to be prepared well as they take their responsibility alongside many others in building our nation. We can no longer afford to sit in front of a TV set and watch the world goes by. We live in a challenging times. It does not allow us to be complacent or continue to live in a presumed comfort zone, because there is none. With globalizations and ever-growing accessibility through info-communication technology, everything can be brought nearer home. We therefore, need to insulate ourselves from negative influences that may affect us while at the same time reaching out to what is ‘good’ outside for the purpose of building a stronger and unified nation.
4. The Ministry also wishes to continuously support the growth of private sector education as we believe such partnership will only strengthen the delivery of high quality education that will benefit everyone. Being at a private school this morning, it would be good if the government and private schools could come together to a point where “**MORE SHARING OF BEST PRACTICES**” takes place. On this, I would like to see more collaboration between Private schools and the government in A Private-Public Partnership (PPP) which would benefit all. The form of partnership may also include, co-teaching or shadowing, training attachments, sharing of resources and joined community work or service. The list may go on and the Ministry welcomes any suggestion by private schools which would serve the common purpose of developing and improving our education services to achieve our goals and targets.
5. I am happy to acknowledge that St. Margaret’s School, having long standing record of achievements, is actively collaborating with the Ministry of Education in pursuing quality teaching and learning in government schools. With this, I hope that such collaboration will continue to flourish, just as St. Margaret’s School has flourished in its 60 years of development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On this auspicious occasion, I would like to congratulate the team of dedicated teachers for their sincere commitments; to the school administration particularly the principal as the school leader for the well governing of the institution as well as for meeting its mission of providing excellent education; to the school Board of Governors for their guidance and directions, and to parents as well as the alumni for their strong support, congratulations everyone, including the students of St. Margaret School.
2. Once again, I would like to thank the Working Committee for the 60th Anniversary Celebration of St. Margaret’s School for inviting me to this important occasion. My appreciations also to the School Board of Governors, the Principal, Members of the Parents - Teachers Association, the teachers and school administration staff and a heartfelt thank you to St. Margaret's school for having served the society for the past six decades and for the exemplary academic excellence. As your school motto goes, “**Be Strong and of Good Courage**”, it is my hope that the school and their students will continue to be strong, both to deliver and achieve the best, In-shaa Allah.

**وبالله التوفيق والهداية**

**والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته**