

Media Release

Embargoed till 9.30pm, Saturday, 7 September 2024



BULAN BAHASA 2024: YOUTHS BRINGING THE MALAY LANGUAGE TO LIFE

7 September 2024 – Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (MBMS or Malay Language Council, Singapore) presented the official launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024 via telecast on Mediacorp Suria, at 8.30pm on Saturday, 7 September 2024. The launch was graced by Guest-of-Honour, President Tharman Shanmugaratnam. The programme is now available for on-demand viewing via MeWATCH.

During the launch programme, Guest-of-Honour President Tharman Shanmugaratnam highlighted that while the English language serves to connect everyone in Singapore's globalised society, mother tongue languages are crucial as they help to preserve our heritage and identity. He encourages the public to participate in the Bulan Bahasa 2024 programmes to enjoy the vibrancy of the Malay language and culture. He also notes that participating in these programmes helps to maintain the relevance of the Malay language and culture within Singapore's diverse society.

Bulan Bahasa Committee Chairman, Mr Zhulkarnain Abdul Rahim thanked everyone for supporting the Bulan Bahasa 2024 initiatives, including community clubs, schools, arts practitioners, and language enthusiasts. He commended all Rakan Bahasa for their role in promoting the Malay culture to the youths, and also noted that the newly appointed Duta Bahasa, Dr Fadzil Hamzah, has the capability to promote the Malay language with authenticity and dedication.

Malay Language Council, Singapore, Chairman, Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman expressed his gratitude to the members of the Malay Language Council, Singapore and its partners for their ongoing efforts to promote a love for the Malay language. He hopes that these efforts will be further enlarged by all groups and demographics, especially the youths who will continue to keep the Malay culture strong and vibrant.

A Programme Featuring Young Performers and their Zest for Malay Language

This year's launch program highlights the prominence of Malay arts and culture, with an emphasis on the dynamic use and presentation of the Malay language. With music arrangements directed by Duta Bahasa (Language Ambassador), Megat Firdaus, the dynamic



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programme line-up delivered a memorable celebration of the language. The programme was hosted by Duta Bahasa Farhana M Noor, and radio and TV personality, Fadli Kamsani.

The audience and viewers were treated to performances by upcoming young singers such as Azra Zulaikha, Amirah Fikriyah, Naufal Aiman and Norshafiq Ridzwan, accompanied by live music from Orkestra Sri Temasek, yiN Harmony and dancers from Sriwana. The programme also featured Team Singapore silat athletes, and the segment included a surprise appearance by Fadli Kamsani, who is also a silat practitioner.

The launch programme continued to showcase the budding talents of Rakan Bahasa (Friends of the Language). Four youthful Rakan Bahasa from Ahmad Ibrahim Primary School and Changkat Changi Secondary School were involved in a news-reading activity with Nursha Ismail, Duta Bahasa appointed since 2023. Five other Rakan Bahasa had participated in a podcast recording, discussing matters pertaining to the usage of Malay language in Singapore.

The newly appointed Duta Bahasa (Language Ambassador), Dr Fadzil Hamzah, presented a stirring poem recitation, inviting the community to appreciate the Malay language.

Promoting Malay Language Through Rap Lyrics

This year, the audience and viewers were also captivated by four talented individuals who were selected to be featured in a short rap segment during the launch programme. Prior to the programme launch, MBMS and Mediacorp Suria had invited the public to create and submit lyrics related to the Malay language and culture for a 30-second music piece arranged by Duta Bahasa, Megat Firdaus. These four individuals had submitted their lyrics and were chosen to present their rap piece at the launch programme, which they did with much enthusiasm.

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About Bulan Bahasa by the Malay Language Council, Singapore

Bulan Bahasa (Malay Language Month) was first launched as a biennial event in 1988 by Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (MBMS or the Malay Language Council, Singapore). Since 2011, it has become an annual celebration that continues to attract community interest, participation and support.

As a signature initiative of the MBMS, Bulan Bahasa is focused on encouraging the community to embrace and use the Malay language in their daily lives. It also aims to instil a deeper appreciation for the Malay culture and promote the preservation of the community's rich heritage.

For more information about MBMS and Bulan Bahasa, please visit mbms.sg, [@bulanbahasa](https://www.instagram.com/bulanbahasa) on Instagram and [facebook.com/majlisbahasa](https://www.facebook.com/majlisbahasa). For Bulan Bahasa's Calendar of Events, visit www.mbms.sg to download the latest schedule.

Theme of Bulan Bahasa

'Cita. Citra. Cinta. Bahasa Kita.' Reflects the dynamism of the Malay language as we move towards a new era. 'Cita' encapsulates the aspiration of the community to maintain the relevance of the Malay language. 'Citra' underscores the diversity in the usage and adaptation

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of the language. It also represents the potential of the Malay language as a window to knowledge and a means of communication. 'Cinta' emphasises the need to cultivate the love and appreciation towards the Malay language.



Annex A

Behind-The-Scenes Photos of the Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024



Duta Bahasa at the Launch of
Bulan Bahasa 2024



From left to right: Chairman, MBMS, Mr Fahmi Aliman; GOH President Tharman Shanmugaratnam; Duta Bahasa 2024, Dr Fadzil Hamzah; and Bulan Bahasa Committee Chairman, Mr Zhulkarnain Abdul Rahim.



Duta Bahasa 2024 performing *sajak* during
the Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024



Singers, dancers and performers at the
Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024



Fadli Kamsani and Farhana M Noor hosting the Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024



Hosts engaging Faiz and Danial Azwar who were shortlisted for the Rap segment, based on their submitted lyrics.



Aliya and Zalifah rapping lyrics in the Rap segment during the Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2024.



From left to right: Duta Bahasa Megat Firdaus, Zhulkarnain Abdul Rahim and Farhana M Noor on-stage to introduce fellow Duta Bahasa 2024

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Azra Zulaikha, Amirah Fikriyah and yiN
Harmony in a song performance



A special stage performance by Team
Singapore silat athletes, singers Norshafiq
and Naufal Aiman, and host Fadli Kamsani

To download high resolution photos, please visit this [link](#).



Annex B

SPEECH BY PRESIDENT THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM
AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF BULAN BAHASA 2024
ON SATURDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2024

1. Salam sejahtera para hadirin sekalian. Saya amat berbesar hati dapat bersama anda pada hari ini untuk Majlis Pelancaran Bulan Bahasa. Bulan Bahasa ialah sebuah sambutan tahunan di mana kita meraikan bahasa, sastera dan budaya Melayu.
2. Tahun ini, tumpuan diberikan kepada belia kita. Ini mengingatkan kita tentang minat, kreativiti dan tenaga para belia kita. Mereka merupakan kunci untuk mempromosikan dan melestarikan bahasa dan budaya Melayu. Tahniah kepada Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura atas usaha mereka untuk terus melibatkan belia melalui inisiatif seperti Rakan Bahasa dan Sahabat Sastera.
3. Seterusnya, izinkan saya menyampaikan ucapan saya dalam bahasa Inggeris.
4. Our mother tongue languages are inseparable from what makes us Singaporean.
 - a. English is the common language in our multicultural society, and has been an essential currency for a city state that is plugged into virtually every corner of the world.
 - b. However, it is our mother tongues that connect us to our heritage and our values, and part of what makes the Singapore identity rich and multi-faceted.

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They give us confidence in who we are, and our place in a rapidly-changing world.

- c. They also allow us to engage with people and cultures across Asia, with economic benefits that have grown with the region's rise. In particular, Singapore is located amidst more than 290 million people who speak bahasa Melayu or Bahasa Indonesia. Speaking the language provides a door to growing opportunities around us.

5. It turns out, too, that bilingualism has broader benefits for the mind. Some studies have shown that children who learn two languages are better at juggling between different tasks, and in their soft skills. And even for adults, frequent speaking of more than one language may be of benefit, by delaying the ageing of the brain. In short, bilingualism is good for all of us.

6. Importantly, languages cannot only be learnt and practised in schools. Our mother tongue languages must be living languages, that we use in daily life, so that they remain alive and relatable to future generations.

7. This is why I hope that you, your families, friends and loved ones, can participate in the activities lined up for this year's Bulan Bahasa, which actually runs for about two months until mid-October.

8. Let's continue to impart the gift of languages to every new generation, and help them experience the intrinsic satisfaction of using the mother tongue in their lives. With your

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support and creative efforts, we can be sure the Malay language and culture continue to be a vibrant thread in Singapore's multicultural fabric.

9. Allow me to end with a pantun.

Bunga mawar di atas batu,

Bersama dengan bunga melati;

Mari hidupkan bahasa Melayu,

Semoga ia kekal dilestari.

Terima kasih.