

**“REUNION AT HILL STREET”  
MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL CELEBRATION 2023  
WELCOME ADDRESS BY  
SCCCI PRESIDENT MR KHO CHOON KENG  
28 SEPTEMBER 2023  
SCCCI BUILDING**

Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education,  
SCCCI Council Members and Members,  
Scholarship Recipients,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening everyone!

1. On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), it is my honour to welcome everyone to the “Reunion at Hill Street” Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration 2023. I wish everyone a happy Mid-Autumn Festival and a happy reunion with your families!
2. The moon has been a source of inspiration for many poets throughout history, especially during festivals like today. Chinese poems such as “May we live forever, and share this beautiful moon a thousand miles apart” ( “但愿人长久，千里共婵娟” ), “As I look up, I see the moon; as I look down, I think of my hometown” ( “举头望明月，低头思故乡” ) and “The moon is exceptionally bright during Mid-Autumn” ( “月到中秋分外明” ) express people’s wishes for reunion and harmony.

3. SCCCI treasures the Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations and its significance very much. Every year without fail, SCCCI celebrates this festival together with our members! The very first Mid-Autumn Festival celebration that was held in this building can be traced back to 20 September 1964 – that was also the day when our founding Prime Minister Mr. Lee Kuan Yew officiated the opening of this building!
4. There is also a story behind the naming of this auditorium: In 1964, the Council initially suggested naming the auditorium after Mr. Lee Kong Chian, who was the biggest donor in the construction of this building. However, Mr. Lee graciously declined and instead suggested naming this auditorium after the late Mr. Tan Kah Kee. As we all know, Mr. Tan Kah Kee was a pioneering figure in Singapore's business community and held in high regard. Naming the auditorium after the late Mr. Tan would encourage younger businessmen at that time to work together to promote the development of Singapore's industry and commerce.
5. After this building's refurbishment, the Council, after careful consideration and guided by SCCCI's core beliefs of "patriotism, integrity, succession, innovation and uniting businesses", decided to continue using the name "*jia geng tang*" (named after the late Mr. Tan Kah Kee) for this auditorium. It is also our honour to have renowned calligraphy artist Mr. Lim Tze Peng specially write these Chinese characters on a plaque. In the presence of Minister Chan Chun Sing, we will officially unveil the plaque tonight!
6. Mr. Tan Kah Kee was an outstanding entrepreneur, educator and philanthropist in Singapore's history. Even when his business faced difficulties, he continued to donate generously to establish schools, benefitting many students in Singapore and China.

7. Mr. Tan Kah Kee's spirit encapsulated in his words "Education is the foundation of a country. The self and family may be sacrificed, but between right and wrong, there can be no compromise" have inspired generation after generation of Singapore Chinese business leaders to give back to society, promote education and help vulnerable groups. The impact of their contributions is not just limited to Singapore, but has also extended to Southeast Asia and China. This plaque unveiling ceremony today is not only a tribute to Mr. Tan Kah Kee, but also a timeless commemoration of his spirit of "Benefitting from the society and contributing back to the society".
  
8. Tonight, we will also be presenting the SCCCI Scholarships to the recipients. Since 1967, SCCCI has awarded scholarships and helped nearly 2,000 students complete their tertiary education, including our Malay and Indian students. We hope all our scholarship recipients will excel in their studies with exemplary character, contribute to our nation, care for, and develop a sense of purpose towards our society, just as Mr. Tan Kah Kee did throughout his illustrious life.
  
9. In addition to the thoughtfully curated programme mentioned above, today is also a very special occasion. Besides celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival, a time of nostalgia and reunion, it is also a time to commemorate our founding Prime Minister Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary. I would like to share the following Chinese poem (rewritten as a modern poem from Singapore's perspective) to encourage everyone:

月到中秋分外明  
人逢团圆倍思家  
国人缅怀建国父  
光耀百年照狮城

10. In closing, I would like to thank Minister Chan Chun Sing and all of you for taking time out of your busy schedule to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival together. Let us continue to work hard for Singapore's prosperity and contribute to the happiness of our society. I wish everyone a happy Mid-Autumn Festival! Thank you!

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