

THE
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AGONG

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To

Mahathir and Basma,

From undergraduate days till now both
if you have given me your friendship.

This I will treasure all the days of my life.

Lim Kuang Hui
— 2007

THE AGONG FESTSCHRIFT

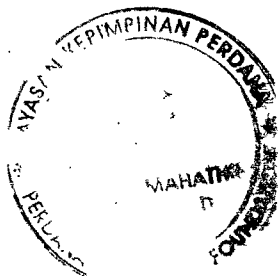
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Dr Lim Kuang Hui



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2007



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"Simply speaking, this is an unusual book. Published as a teaser for private circulation only, this coffee-table book is at once a collector's item with the alumni die-hards. I must say it's a remarkable effort, even when I still maintain that it should not have been published. My salad years. Those were the days of nostalgia, and time has gone by."

- Agong

Why this book? No man is great in his life-time. A man is great only in the pages of history.

- Editor



Grateful thanks to Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, Singapore for the FOREWORD;
Prof Arthur Lim Siew Ming, 5th term elected President of the Alumni Association for commissioning this work; the many generous Donors who have chosen to remain anonymous:
Dr Wong Sze Tai, Chairman of the Southern Branch for organising the Festschrift on the occasion of the 85th birthday of Dr Chee Phui Hung;
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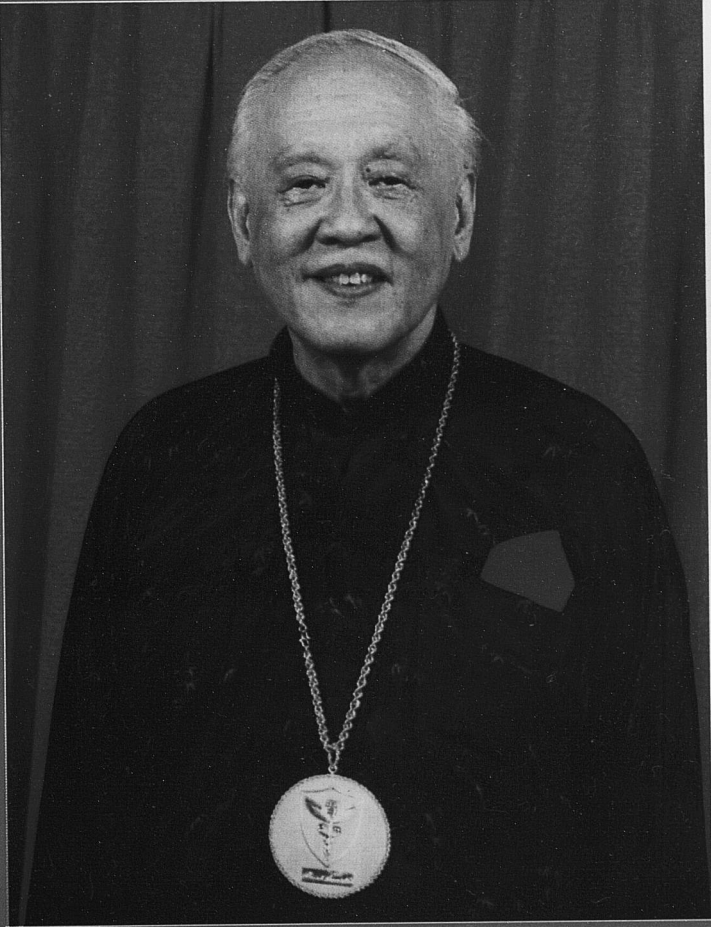
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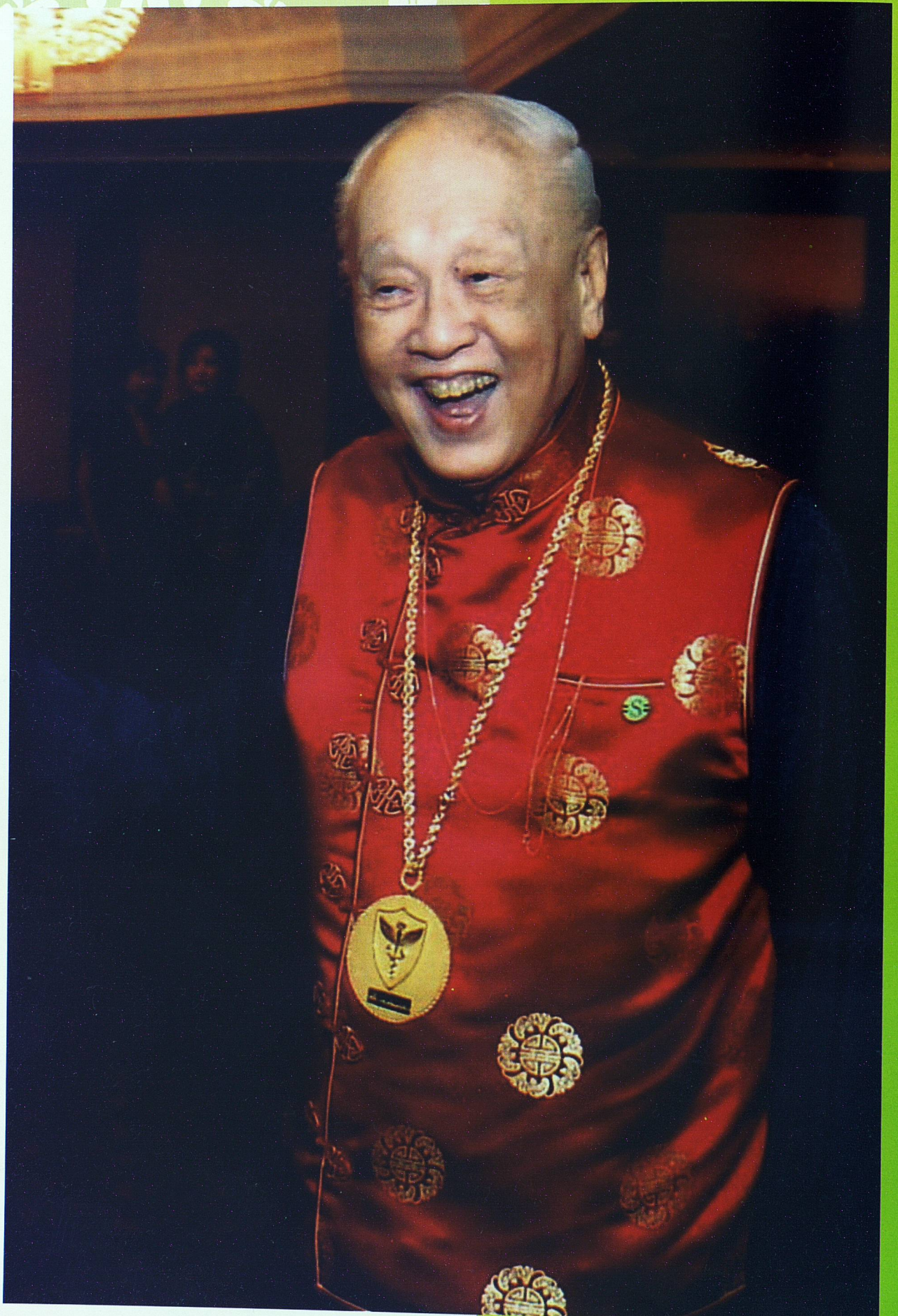


SM Goh Chok Tong welcomed on his arrival by Prof Arthur Lim and Dr Chee PH.

Dr Chee PH shows SM Goh Chok Tong around the Alumni Medical Centre.







**Honorary Member 2004:
Mr Goh Chok Tong,
Senior Minister, Singapore**

*Citation by Prof Arthur Lim,
President, Alumni Association*

It is with great pleasure that I present this citation of Honorary Membership on Senior Minister, Goh Chok Tong.

The Honorary Membership is awarded to outstanding doctors who have contributed significantly to the country. Every honorary member was a doctor.

Today, for the first time, the Honorary Membership will be presented to a non-medical graduate, Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong. I would like to emphasise that this decision was unanimous. This decision was because of Goh Chok Tong's interest and contributions to the Medical Alumni. Different from some politicians, Goh Chok Tong was an example of what a good doctor should be - compassionate, friendly, gentle, caring, always keeping in mind best the interests of the people he met.

As you know, Goh Chok Tong became Singapore's second Prime Minister on 28 November 1990. It was not an easy task to succeed Lee Kuan Yew.

Goh Chok Tong is a towering, trusted, caring, affectionate and warm leader loved by the people of Singapore. His life is marked by rich encounters,

bonding him to the common people, the men in the street. Those who know Goh Chok Tong well refer to him as the people's Prime Minister.

When Mr Goh Chok Tong took office, he was armed with enthusiasm as he had an intense desire to serve the people. One of his great strengths is his ability to attract strong support from all who meet him. His natural warmth and sincerity have made him one of the most loved and popular leaders in Asia.

Although highly intelligent and analytical in politics and economics, and an effective debater of difficult and controversial political issues, he will always be remembered as a leader who was compassionate and friendly. His abilities were equal to the leading politicians of the world. Yet, there are few renowned leaders with his warmth and compassion.

In our troubled world today, burdened with explosive dangers, we pray that world leaders and Singapore leaders will follow Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong's style of leadership, by being kinder, trusted, more friendly and compassionate.

Senior Minister, it is my pleasure to tell you that the doctors, dental surgeons and pharmacists of our Medical Alumni are honoured and delighted to have such an extraordinary leader of Singapore, a leader of the world, to be an honorary member of our Association.

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SM's 'doctor traits' win praise

By RADHA BASU

SENIOR Minister Goh Chok Tong made history last night by becoming the first non-doctor to be made an honorary member of the association of Singapore medical graduates.

His compassion, caring and gentleness — all hallmarks of a good doctor — were qualities that prompted the medical alumni to confer the honour on him, said the association's new president, eye surgeon Arthur Lim.

The announcement was made at the alumni's annual reunion dinner, at which generations of doctors rubbed shoulders over food and wine and reminisced about days gone by.

The association has 1,000 active members, about a fifth of whom are Malaysians.

About 800 filled the Shangri-La Hotel ballroom, includ-

ing Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan, National University of Singapore president Shih Choon Fong and the vice-chancellor of the University of Malaya, Professor Hashim Yaacob.

Mr Goh's warm acceptance speech on the similarities between an MP and a doctor, peppered with his gentle sense of humour, had them in stitches. He did not spare himself, poking fun at his new-found status: "We know Singapore is famed for its instant trees. Now you are introducing a new species of instant 'doctors'."

Like doctors, MPs, at their Meet-the-People sessions, also solved the problems of those in "real pain", said Mr Goh and, with a wide grin, added: "And like you, we suffer in silence when we encounter those who are a real pain."

Extending his observation, he noted the growing number

of doctors in politics. Nine out of the 84 MPs are doctors and in the Cabinet, "we have a breast cancer surgeon, an eye specialist and a neurologist when we had none before".

He added, to roars of laughter: "Cabinet may soon run its own medical service."

But the roar that almost raised the roof of the ballroom was when he gave his response on whether a doctor can make a good MP: "Yes, only if he is not interested in chasing after money."

Despite the growing number of doctor-MPs, Mr Goh urged even more among them to enter politics.

He said: "Just as you have graciously invited me to join your medical fraternity tonight, I would like to invite especially the younger members, with the passion and aptitude for public service, to join our political fraternity."

Reproduced from *The Straits Times*, 4 December 2004.

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MESSAGE



PROFESSOR ARTHUR LIM

MD (Hon), FRCS

*President, Alumni Association, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004/
2005, 2007/2008*

Alumni Gold Medallist 1998

What a pleasure it is for me to write this message of congratulation and affection in appreciation of Chee Phui Hung for his years of dedication to the Medical Alumni Association.

We have known each other well for five decades. We have got along exceedingly well since the early days when he met his charming wife, Diana, who I knew as a young man as our parents were family friends. Phui Hung and I progressed through life as close friends climbing the medical ladder as

young graduates, until today. Although working in different fields of the Singapore medical arena we are still mentally and intellectually akin.

His wonderful work in the Alumni is known to everyone.

From the beginning, as an outstanding medical student, he excelled at whatever he did. He was more than the University's academic champion; Phui Hung was also one of the world's best badminton players who entered the Double Final of the Open Malayan Badminton Championship at the time when Malaya was the world's leading badminton country. He carved a reputation for himself as a great debator and became the President of the Students' Union. Upon graduating from the University, he continued to immerse himself in a multitude of activities. His debating skills, exceptional knowledge of constitutions and detailed eye for the accuracy of minutes and annual reports made him a "terror" at the annual meetings of many organisations. It is well known that many presidents and leaders of organisations spent hours worrying about what Phui Hung would ask at their annual meetings.

His aggressive approach in firing questions and lively debating style at the Guild of Graduate meetings and the Singapore Island Club often led to "fireworks" and even led to the dissolution of the Guild of Graduates and legal problems at the Island Club. These at once, and correctly, established Phui Hung as the foremost debater in Singapore who at one point challenged Lee Kuan Yew to open debate live on TV any where, any time.

His exuberant energy in debates and his wonderful support of the Medical Alumni did not stop there.

Phui Hung is at the Alumni every day ensuring that the society progresses and develops. He has spent much effort raising funds to establish a comfortable Alumni Centre for our members in the past decade. My experience is that when Phui Hung suddenly becomes very courteous and flatters you, he is up to something. My major contribution of \$100,000/- was the result of a quiet dinner and several days of praise and gentle persuasion until I had to tell Phui Hung "I cannot resist your request."

Over the past 50 years, we have encountered some of the most delightful and amusing adventures in the Alumni, which will be penned in this publication.

The influence of Phui Hung's work is not restricted to the Medical Alumni, as it has become a most persuasive example of intense bonding. We know that for nations, organisations, alumni and family to stay together united, intense bonding is essential and few individuals can replicate the bonds that were generated by Phui Hung. If Phui Hung's ability at bonding and uniting people can be transposed

to national level, our country will progress even more rapidly. If the same bonds can be created between two persons as husband and wife, more golden anniversaries will be celebrated and there will be fewer divorce cases. The recent increase in marital problems is due to the lack of bonding between the partners.

Phui Hung can be said to be a brilliant conversationalist and debator on any subject, full of ideas and equally full of the joys of living. Phui Hung is an individual with rare wisdom and he has been recognised repeatedly by our University (NUS) as one of the most important graduates it has ever produced.

Phui Hung's dedication to the University is worthy of emulation by our doctors, dental surgeons, pharmacists, graduate nurses, and every Singapore citizen as the lesson of intense bonding has become important to everyone.

To him, I send my greetings and congratulations. To everyone, I am confident that you will embrace the importance of bonding and dedication.





This book is about.....

Dr Chee Phui Hung (on the occasion of his 85th birthday), who is an Alumnus of our own medical school in the then University of Malaya (Class of 1950), and is a light-hearted coffee-table book to celebrate his leadership and many contributions, both to the Alumni Association and his alma mater, now the National University of Singapore.

The book is structured as a loosely gathered collection of insights on or about Dr Chee, from his friends and colleagues in the Alumni Association, to make for amusing reading, and for a bit of a dig at the man, as would be the informal manner and light-hearted traditions that have evolved among the Alumni fraternity. This informality has worked wonders at the Alumni Medical Centre where the alumni gather, and where VVIPs and undergraduate students alike meet as equals for “brain-storming” sessions and to exchange ideas.

Affectionately known to all within the Alumni circles as “Agong”, no one will doubt that without the Agong there is no Alumni Association, as it is his dedication, almost to an unholy passion, that has kept the Alumni community humming.

Directly or indirectly, Agong has also influenced the Alumni Association by coaxing and “arm-twisting” the unwilling helpers to hold office and, later, to accept the several sweeteners (polite word for “bribes”) which became the so-called Alumni awards. Such was, and still is, his passion for the Alumni. Such were his bullying tactics and rascally ways, especially when confronting the University and the Establishment, that has earned him a notoriety, if not an icon of sorts, not only within the Alumni circles but with his alma mater - the present day National University of Singapore and Universiti Malaya - in our two countries.

These “Tributes” are gathered from many of his fellow Alumni members and peers, who have known him and, fortunately or unfortunately, met up with him, since their early Medical School days, when he was notorious as Chief Ragger at college. His reputation still lingers to this day, even as he often tends to, but tries to avoid, living in the past.

This publication is yet another documentation of our varied medical heritage. It is meant as a reader-friendly photo-essay on the Alumni Association in general, focused around its most notorious Alumnus. His is one of a kind of his generation, as with this book.

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