

Adult education system has to evolve to 'get tomorrow's jobs for today's Singaporeans': Chan Chun Sing



Mr Chan Chun Sing also urged Singaporeans to continue building links beyond our shores, and guard against developing an island mentality. ST PHOTO: LAU FOOK KONG

PUBLISHED

AUG 26, 2017, 9:43 PM SGT

SINGAPORE - Singapore has to keep evolving its adult education system, so that its people are one step ahead of others in this rapidly changing economy, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Chan Chun Sing on Saturday (Aug 26).

Speaking at a panel discussion at the inaugural Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Alumni Awardees Gala Reunion, he shared that workers should be equipped with the skill sets for tomorrow's jobs, rather than just today's jobs.

"There is no point for us to get yesterday's jobs, or even today's jobs, for today's Singaporeans," he added. "The question is whether we can get tomorrow's jobs for today's Singaporeans."

Only then can Singaporeans take care of themselves and their families going forward, said Mr Chan, adding that Singapore needs to move "from compulsory education to continuing education".

He shared how career guidance, for instance, already well established at institutions here, can be made more accessible for adult workers so they can take on new opportunities when they come.

The gala reunion, held at Shangri-La Hotel, is a new platform for the university's alumni award winners to engage in a dialogue with a Singapore leader and their fellow alumni on current issues.

During the discussion on the challenges and opportunities in the future economy, Mr Chan, who is also labour chief, touched on the fine balance in deciding what technology to adopt, so no Singaporean, young or old, is left behind.

He also urged Singaporeans to continue building links beyond our shores, and guard against developing an island mentality.

The other panellists included Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon, a former minister of state; Mr Tan Chin Hwee, member of the NTU board of trustees; and Dr Lim Jui, chief executive of NTUitive, the innovation and enterprise arm of NTU. The session was led by Mr Inderjit Singh, a member of the NTU board of trustees and a former Member of Parliament.

At the event attended by some 200 guests, NTU also established an endowed professorship in early childhood education in honour of the late education stalwart Lee Sing Kong, NTU's vice president for alumni and advancement.

The Lee Sing Kong Professorship in Early Childhood Education honours his contributions to Singapore, in particular his lifelong dedication to education.

A new NTU bursary for Singaporean students from less privileged families will also be set up in his name.

Prof Lee, a former National Institute of Education director, died of a suspected heart attack on May 19 this year, at age 65.

Both the professorship and bursary will be funded through a new endowment fund.

NTU president Bertil Andersson said Prof Lee had served "with immense commitment and distinction".

He said the professorship will continue Prof Lee's legacy of furthering the importance of education, particularly during early childhood.

Source: <http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/adult-education-system-has-to-evolve-to-get-tomorrows-jobs-for-todays-singaporeans-chan>