

**SPEECH BY DR MD BADRUN NAFIS SAION CHAIRMAN OF AMP
SINGAPORE AT THE LAUNCH OF THE INDIAN MUSLIMS IN
SINGAPORE: HISTORY, HERITAGE AND CONTRIBUTIONS ON
SATURDAY 11 JUNE 2022 AT 3.00PM AT THE MUIS THEATRETTE**

President Halimah Yacob

Your Excellencies

Dr Albakri Ahmad

Fellow board members and community leaders

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

A very good afternoon.

Thank you for taking the time to join us today at this momentous occasion. We are here today to witness the launch of the latest publication by AMP's research subsidiary, the Centre for Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs, RIMA. The book, titled Indian Muslims in Singapore: History, Heritage and Contributions, has been three years in the making, meticulously researched and written by the author, Dr Abdul Razak Chanbasha.

Dr Razak is someone who needs no introduction. He's been active in the community since 1983, first with Darul Arqam. He was also one of the activists that led the formation of AMP in 1991 and remained a member of the Board until 2009. He also chaired the Board of AMP's education subsidiary, MERCU Learning Point, and RIMA. He is currently serving in the Board of RIMA as well.

Like many of the luminaries featured in the book, Dr Razak's contributions to the community are not limited to just one, single organisation. He has served in MUIS and currently, in Warees Investments.

For his contributions to the community, he was awarded the Pingat Bakti Masyarakat and appointed Justice of the Peace. Dr Razak's list of achievements continue beyond the world of activism. He has a doctorate in Physics and is the Technical Director of A R C Sciences, a company which he started that specialises in nanoscience in the field of surface nano analysis and thin film growth.

Dr Razak has always been passionate about the Muslim community here, as can be seen by his involvement in the various Muslim organisations. So, it is fitting that he embarked on this project to trace the history, heritage and contributions of Indian Muslims who have made a mark in the community here. Thus far, there haven't been many books published on the Indian Muslim community, so this book will certainly be a good starting point for further research on the community in the future.

This book would have not been possible without the hard work of the research analysts and administrative staff support team in RIMA. As the research subsidiary of AMP, RIMA plays an important role in conducting research on the Muslim community here. Their research not only includes that which involve bread-and-butter issues, like employment, education, and social mobility, but also historical research such as this book. In fact, about 16 years ago, they published a book that traces the history of Malay Muslims in Singapore from 1819 to our independence. As such, this book, which looks at the history of the Indian Muslim community was a natural extension of the earlier book.

Ladies and gentlemen.

When we talk about the Muslim community, there are some who immediately think of Malays. However, we know that the Muslim community is made up of a beautiful diversity of cultures and races. Although the Indians may not form the majority of Muslims in Singapore, their role and contributions are far greater than their numbers. They have played important roles and contributed immensely to the economic and social development of the Muslim community here.

In AMP, many of our generous donors and volunteers are from the Indian Muslim community. In fact, some of our biggest donors are of Indian heritage. Similarly, the beneficiaries of our programmes are not just Malay Muslims, but also those from different ethnic groups, including Indians.

One such beneficiary is Mdm Shariffa Mohamed. Mdm Shariffa was a participant of our Micro Business programme. The programme equips those from a low-income background with trade, business and IT skills so they can start a business on a small scale.

Through the years, we have seen many success stories come out of this programme, including Mdm Shariffa, who started out by selling putu mayam and murukku from home. After going through the programme, she successfully secured a hawker stall at Redhill Lane Food Centre. She now sells crowd favourites such as puri, idli and appam at her stall. She participated in our inaugural charity bake sale last year by making murukku as a way of giving back to the community.

It is important that when we progress as a community, we progress together as one, regardless of our race, because beyond our race, it is our identity as Muslims that bond us as a community. And as Muslims, we should band together to support each other, including those who may be from other ethnic groups.

This is an opportune time to announce that in conjunction with the launch of this book, AMP has embarked on a special fund raising drive to raise funds for the Indian Muslim community. To date, we have raised more than \$250,000. Apart from AMP, the funds raised will also be disbursed to Education Trust Fund ETF, Singapore Indian Development Association SINDA, and seven mosques that primarily serve the Indian Muslim community – Abdul Gafoor, Al-Abrar, Angullia, Bencoolen, Jamae Chulia, Malabar and Moulana Mohd Ali Mosque.

I would like to take this opportunity to record my deep gratitude to all our generous donors, some of whom have joined us here today, for their contributions, which will no doubt go a long way in the development of the Indian Muslim community as well as the Muslim community as a whole.

I would also like to record my appreciation to the special fund raising committee who have worked tirelessly to raise the funds over the last few months. My deep appreciation goes out to Dr Abdul Razak Chanbasha, Mr Abdul Razak Hassan Maricar, Mr Mohd Anuar Yusop and our Executive Director, Mohksin Rashid, who is unable to join us today as he is on a work trip.

With that, I hope you will enjoy learning more about the Indian Muslim community's history and heritage at today's event. It is my hope that this will allow each one of us to have a deeper understanding and appreciation for the Indian Muslims' contributions to the larger Muslim community here through the years and I am sure, in years to come.

Thank you.

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