

OPENING REMARKS BY MR BRUCE POH, DIRECTOR & CEO/ITE, AT THE IGNITE SKILLS CHALLENGE 2016 FINALS, ITE COLLEGE EAST, ON 24 MAY 2016, AT 1030 HRS

Dr Janil Puthucheary,
Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information &
Ministry of Education

Principals, Teachers and Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

1 Good morning and welcome to the Finals of the inaugural Ignite Skills Challenge! I would also like to thank Dr Janil Puthucheary for officiating today's event.

Merging Two National Competitions

2 Eight years ago, ITE set out to do something which had never been done before – organising a nation-wide Science Competition for secondary school students in the Normal stream. We introduced the IgnITE Science & Technology Challenge, with the aim to make science interesting and fun through everyday science activities and projects.

3 Since then, we have seen the Challenge grow – from just 200 students from 40 schools, to 726 students from 49 schools at its peak.

4 To get more students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, or STEM, ITE, in 2013, started the ITE Skills Challenge. Participation was equally enthusiastic among the schools, with the number of competitors doubling in two years.

5 So now, we have two competitions with similar aims and are equally popular. Naturally, we decided to combine the two competitions and make one bigger competition, so more students and more schools can enjoy learning not just about Science, Technology and Engineering, but about skills as well!

6 From this year, the two competitions have merged to become the **ITE IgnITE Skills Challenge**. The competition is open to Normal Stream students and has 12 categories. I'm told that over 1,600 students from 68 schools participated in the workshops held earlier in the year. That's very encouraging.

7 I have walked around the booths and I see a lot of hidden talent! I have seen candy that looks exactly like the bowl of wanton mee I had yesterday, robots assembled in a short time frame, mobile apps created by 14-year-olds to teach toddlers Mathematics, and more.

Conclusion

8 I hope that the ITE IgnITE Skills Challenge has inspired you to look at STEM subjects in a different light. And, of course, I hope you all had plenty of fun while learning.

9 Before I let my colleagues announce the winners of the Competition – I'm sure you all are very excited about that – I would like to first thank The Science Centre and MOE for supporting us all these years. The competition would not have taken off so well without your help. I would also like to thank our many Sponsors who have contributed generously to the prizes. Your support is greatly appreciated.

10 To you students, I want to say, continue to be curious. You can do so much and create new things when you have the curiosity to learn. I do hope that you are now inspired by the value of science and skills.

Thank you!