

Not handouts but a culture of responsibility

Tharman says systemwide help can have negative effects

Students lifted questions on a wide range of issues, from new policies to property prices and competition from for-profit universities, but he would rather not comment on one issue: the environment.

We’re not in happy part of cycle, Tharman admits

Tharman, who is also Finance and Central Bank chief, is seen as a key player in the Government’s housing and other economic strategies.

Maintaining a relationship of trust between Govt and people

In a wide-ranging interview, Tharman said he would like to see "steady, continuous growth" in years ahead.

"We’re not in happy part of the cycle, in terms of growth," he said, referring to the current economic climate. "Some of the pressures are coming from outside, some of them are coming from within.

"But overall we’re in a reasonably good position. The economy has been growing quite strongly, and we’re looking at sustained moderate growth in the future.

"So we need to continue to work hard to make sure that we have good policies in place, that we’re able to manage the economy well, and that we’re able to deal with any challenges that come our way."