



SINGAPORE - Salsa dancer Emmalyn Tan, 21, did not imagine that putting up a performance in Chingay this year would get her an invitation to the Istana.

But she was among the performers, sponsors and partners who were invited by President Halimah Yacob to her official residence so she could show appreciation for their efforts at [the recent Chingay showcase at Jewel Changi Airport](#) on Feb 12.

The second-year Singapore Management University law student, who performed with her school's salsa team Caderas Latinas, said it was her first time at the Istana. "I am so excited to be here because I've always wanted to visit with my family, but it was too crowded."



Ms Tan, whose team was chosen from the People's Association's (PA) We've Got Talent contest to perform in Chingay, said it was slightly nerve-racking dancing in front of Madam Halimah and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

"The ambience, floats and lights got us excited. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience," she added.

In her speech at the appreciation reception on Wednesday (Feb 16), Madam Halimah said she was always fascinated by Chingay stilt walkers and was impressed by the Chinese wedding-on-stilts act in this year's show, which she attended with her husband, Mr Mohamed Abdullah Alhabshee.

"Since young, when Chingay was a relatively small parade on the streets, I enjoyed watching the stilt performers. It must be quite a feat."



"This year is a special milestone for Chingay as we commemorate its 50th anniversary. Over the years, the Chingay Parade has become Singapore's signature multicultural event that brings people from diverse cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds together to celebrate our rich heritage and local talents."

She thanked the PA, the Tote Board Group, the Singapore Tourism Board, as well as community and corporate contributors for making Chingay's golden jubilee celebrations possible.

The sponsors and donors for Chingay50 include DBS Bank, Skechers, JCDecaux, DFI Retail Group, Changi Airport Group, Nunchi Marine and KKL Enterprise, among others.