

Singapore Government

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SPEECH BY MR PETER CHEN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, AT THE
INTER-TERTIARY INSTITUTE STAFF (ITIS) – NUSS GAMES 1999 CLOSING CEREMONY

ON SATURDAY 13 NOVEMBER 1999 AT 12.15 PM

AT TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC STAFF CENTRE

Ladies and gentlemen

A very good afternoon to everyone. It is indeed my pleasure to be invited to this closing ceremony.

2 The Inter Tertiary Institute Staff – NUSS Games was initiated by NUSS in 1984 to foster closer rapport between the staff of tertiary institutes and the graduates of NUS. Up to 1995, the Games were held every year. Since then, it has been held once every two years. The recently completed 1999 Games was the 14th in this series.

3 There are a few reasons why these Games have remained so popular through the years. Firstly, to prepare yourselves for such competitive activities, you have to be both physically and mentally fit. This provides a strong motivation for you to put yourselves through some form of training regime. It is an excellent opportunity for you to keep fit and have fun at the same time. This is a very important ingredient for the successful promotion of any sporting activity.

4 The second reason is the camaraderie generated. At these games, you make new friends and establish contacts either in the area of work or sport. This networking can lead to a greater sharing of ideas and knowledge. The overall result is a greater feeling of oneness with each other which makes it easier for future collaboration and co-operation. Of course, this requires a certain degree of

sportsmanship and a culture of friendly competition.

5 Thirdly, the Games offer you the challenge of representing your organisation in your own small scale "Olympic" Games. The ITIS-NUSS Games is your Olympic dream. So, whatever age you are, there is still a little dream there of breasting the tape in front of thousands of spectators or of scoring the winning goal to thunderous cheers.

6 I understand that the level of interest and commitment is very encouraging indeed. It is even more encouraging to note that the senior management of the 7 participating institutes and society have supported the event as well as your participation so whole-heartedly. At a time when we are promoting healthy lifestyles for the workforce, it is appropriate that employers are beginning to acknowledge these activities as part of work, and not just something you carry out at your own time and expenses after work.

7 This year, the Ministry of Health has launched the ACTIVE Day as well as introduced the HEALTH Award to organisations who have actively promoted workplace health. Temasek Polytechnic received a Silver Award for their comprehensive Staff Wellness Programme, and NTU received a bronze award. These are just some of the Government's efforts to spread the message that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce.

8 I trust all of you have had a good time during this year's Games. I hope you will continue to support and participate in this event year after year. There are no losers in this Games. Everyone is a winner here. I'm not just talking about medals – our health improves, our spirits are lifted, new friendships are established, your contributions are acknowledged and even rewarded.

9 I thank the organisers for inviting me to be part of this celebration. And I wish all of you the best in your pursuit of your "Olympic" dream.

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