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SPEECH BY INCHE MOHD. GHAZALI ISMAIL, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, AT THE PRESENTATION OF PRIZES TO THE WINNERS OF THE PESTA SUKAN INTERNATIONAL SEPAKTAKRAW COMPETITIONS ON TUESDAY, 11.8.1970 AT 8.00 P.M. AT P.S.A. RECREATION CLUB.

Distinguished guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

This is a very special occasion for me and I am very happy to be present here this evening to give away the prizes to the winners of the Pesta Sukan International Sepaktakraw Competitions, organised by the Singapore Sepaktakraw Association, of which I am serving as the President.

Life in Singapore is becoming increasingly urbanised and Singaporeans living in this industrializing centre of commerce are fully aware of the vital need for a proportionate amount of healthy recreation. Efficient machines have to be manned by equally efficient men and women. Industrial development embraces also the development of a strong and healthy workforce. This is true of the individual, the Nation and the developing countries of this region.

The problems of providing adequate facilities for recreation, for this small island nation in particular, will always be the problem of space. Furthermore for a recreation that will reach the people, the question of cost has also to be considered besides that it has to be an activity which emerges from our culture. Eventually this game that we fondly call Sepaktakraw evolved.

Sepaktakraw is a game which hitherto has been associated with only a few nations of South-East Asia and therefore it needs much encouragement and support before it can gain greater popularity with other nations. This is a game that grew out of the related cultures of the South East Asian region.

As a step in the encouragement of this game, Sepaktakraw has been included as one of the events of the Pesta Sukan. There will be a great deal more to be done to extend this interest in Sepaktakraw before it gains recognition as a game worthy of inclusion in International Sports. While we are quite happy to play this game within the family circle,

so to speak, I still hope that the Sepaktakraw associations in Singapore, Malaysia, Laos, Thailand and other countries of South East Asia will endeavour to extend it.

The competition has been very efficiently run and I am sure all those who watched enjoyed themselves as much as those who played. I hope that the associations and the friendly ties that we have forged will grow stronger as the years go by so that our friendship will stand up to the stresses and strains of the changing times. May I congratulate the winners and thank all the organisers who have worked so hard to make the Sepaktakraw event of Pesta Sukan a success.
