

EMBARGOED TILL AFTER DELIVERY

SPEECH BY ENCIK SHA'ARI TADIN, PARLIAMENTARY  
SECRETARY (CULTURE) & MP FOR KG. CHAI CHEE, AT  
THE SHA'ARI TADIN CHALLENGE CUP BASKETBALL  
TOURNAMENT AT BLOCK 22 BASKETBALL COURT, KG.  
CHAI CHEE HDB ESTATE ON SATURDAY, 30 JUN 73 AT  
7.30 P.M.

I am glad to be here today to start off our annual basketball tournament.

This month-long tournament, organised by the Kampong Chai Chea Constituency Sports Association to coincide with our National Day celebrations, should prove an exciting one. Many of the constituencies in the Rural Eastern District of Singapore will be supporting the tournament and we look forward to keen competition among the participants and an even keener enthusiasm and interest among the spectators.

Basketball has always been a popular sport in Singapore among the Singapore Chinese and I would strongly urge our non-Chinese citizens to develop and expand their interests in this sphere. It is an ideal kind of sport to encourage in a small, compact island like ours, where adequate space for recreational activities is relatively difficult to come by. Some countries may be able to boast of wide open spaces or huge, government-sponsored sports programmes designed to boost national prestige. Here in Singapore, however, we have to make the best of what we have — our beaches, our swimming pools, our well-planned and strategically located green parks, our long rural roads and reservoir areas of peace and quiet.

What we have is not too little but it is not too much either. So we have to be on the look-out always for every small chance to enjoy ourselves in healthy, keep-fit ways.

A game like basketball can be played within the precincts of most of our community centres and this is its big advantage. The ordinary young worker or student can find close at hand a regular and profitable means of recreation

But basketball is more than just a means of recreation or a friendly game. It can represent a most worthwhile kind of challenge to the psyche tired out by the day's labours and frustrations. Relaxation

does not really mean merely lying down or sitting down or whiling away the hours in an aimless, desultory fashion. True relaxation very often means just a change of pace, a shift of stance, the substitution of one goal for another quite different. Training for a competitive sport like basketball after work or hard study can prove a most rewarding way to relax, I am sure.

A nation of young people who aim to spend their leisure hours in this kind of constructive way can also mean a general lift of morale and purpose in the country as a whole. Let us not forget that we, as Singaporeans, must be always moving forward on the road to new progress, new effort, new challenge.

During my recent visit to the Soviet Union, I was happily impressed with just this kind of progress-orientated dynamism. One finds that people in the Soviet Union do not idle away their time. At work or play, whether it is the promotion of sports, arts and culture or the latest scientific technology, the Soviet citizens are usually seriously and challengingly involved. We would not do amiss adopt such a spirit of high-minded "application" to life.

I wish the participants in this tournament the best of luck and energy. Play as you work — with purpose and dedication and a keen vision of your goals. I now declare this tournament open and offer my congratulations to the Management Committee of the Kampong Chai Chee Constituency Sports Association for organising it.

DATED: JUNE 30, 1973.

TIME ISSUED: 1300 HOURS.

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