

SPEECH BY MR CHAI CHONG YII, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, AT THE OPENING OF THE COURSE ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION ON SATURDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 75 AT 10 AM AT HWA CHONG JUNIOR COLLEGE

In most educational systems, Physical Education figures prominently in the overall curriculum. One important reason is that the physical development of the child is fundamental to his total development as a person. The acquisition of physical skills and qualities is essential for a person to live a purposeful life. Thus these skills have to be taught, facilities have to be deliberately provided and the physical growth of the child has to be carefully nurtured.

2 PE is an educational medium designed to attain objectives of education through selected physical activities. These activities when properly controlled and supervised can contribute to the emotional development of a child. PE activities help develop dexterity, accuracy, speed, balance, coordination and agility/<sup>and they</sup> in turn help develop desirable values and attitudes in a child. These are skills and attitudes necessary to cope with the problems of adult life. PE teachers have to be aware of this double value of PE and deliberately exploit to the full the educational value of the subject. By its very nature in offering enjoyable and vigorous activities which satisfy the natural propensities of children, the educational value inherent in the subject should be harnessed.

3 It would be futile to list the values and attitudes that PE can form and strengthen in individual persons. Some of them however, are worth mentioning when value cultivation and attitudinal formation are of top priority in our education.

Imaginative and well-constructed PE lessons could go a long way in developing in our young proper health habits, a sound outlook on life, correct attitudes towards recreation and leisure, a spirit of sportsmanship and co-operation, respect for law and order and the decisions of the arbiter, discipline, perseverance and leadership qualities. The thoughtful PE teacher could easily teach respect for property of the school and orderly habits in the way he supervises the use and replacement of PE equipment. Courtesy, good manners and socialising can also be by-products of a PE lesson. Even friendly and healthy competition during PE activities can be employed as an educational instrument to mould character and teach humility in victory and nobility in defeat.

4 Education is to bring out the good in a person, to develop his talents and prepare him to take his place as a responsible member of society. Physical education as part of the educative process and with its scope to contribute, should be fully exploited to help realise the objectives. I wish to recommend to the participants of this course that even while they acquire new techniques and skills of teaching PE, that they remain cognizant of the educational objectives of PE and seek to discover further how best PE can fulfil these objectives.

5 I wish you all a very successful and gainful course and have pleasure in declaring it open.

Thank you.