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SPEECH BY MR. CHAN CHEE SENG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,  
(SOCIAL AFFAIRS) AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, ORGANISING COUNCIL  
5TH ASIAN CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIPS ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
CLOSING CEREMONY AND DINNER FOR THE 5TH ASIAN CYCLING  
CHAMPIONSHIPS AT KING'S HOTEL, ON SATURDAY, 30TH  
OCTOBER, 1971 AT 7.30 P.M.

We have all gone through the age and stage of taking to the two-wheeler called the bicycle as not only a means of transportation from one point to the other but also as a vehicle which takes us to points of pleasure and through which we derive lots of fun. Did not many of us recall our days of childhood when we have singular ambitions to own bicycles of our own and when they were used as incentives by our parents to get the best out of us in our conduct and studies.

It is surprising but true that in the more materialistically advanced countries of Europe, America and Japan, cycling as a sport has come to stay for spectator support and even as big business.

Singapore itself is a remarkable story of growth from nothing into a throbbing metropolis, entrepot, industrial base and multi-cultural society in a little over 150 years and 200 square miles and 2 million people. Discipline and determination of the people has got us through trials and tribulations, through results and reassurances, through peace and progress to a challenging and optimistic future.

The Asian Cycling Federation, too, should work with such grit and determination to actively generate and popularise the sport of cycling through its member organisations in more Asian countries and exhort the Governments to encourage the sport which can do nothing but good and to provide the infra-structure for the facility and general support for it.

As you may know, we are also providing increasingly up-to-date facilities for sports and with the completion of our fast-rising sports complex in Kallang, we should be able, in the near future, to host bigger and better international sporting events in Singapore. In fact, the basic requirements of international meets like the Asian Games could be met in Singapore by 1974 or at the latest 1975 and we hope by then our annual Posta Sukan will have also correspondingly grown in size and stature.

We have in recent years had a variety of international events in Singapore and on the sports side hosted, besides our annual Posta Sukan, the Asian and Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships.

This function, serving the purpose of a get-together dinner as well as the Closing Ceremony for our 5th Asian Cycling Championships, which has after a successful season come to a happy end, is hosted in the name of my Minister, Inche Othman Wok, who besides being Minister for Sports, is also Chairman of the National Sports Promotion Board and the outgoing President of the Asian Cycling Federation. Unfortunately, the Minister has another very big engagement today in being Guest-of-Honour at the Lions Convention function and he has asked me to convey you his deepest apologies for not being able to be with you and to partake in your company and merriment of the occasion here. It is my pleasure and privilege to stand in on behalf of the Minister both as his Parliamentary Secretary as well as Deputy Chairman of the Organising Council for the 5th Asian Cycling Championships.

In the past three months the sport of cycling has been in the forefront of Singapore publicity leading to the organisation of the Championships as well as cycling events of the Pesta Sukan in August, providing for a great deal of coverage on cycling through the mass media of the television and the Press.

In this sense nothing better has happened to be a filip for the sport of cycling in Singapore and to give it a promising future than the 5th Asian Cycling Championships and I am sure that the Singapore Amateur Cycling Association and cycling enthusiasts and supporters are not only grateful for this but will take full advantage of this in future.

We in Singapore regard a sports event like the Asian Cycling Championships as an occasion of inestimable importance. The role of sports as a unifying force amongst peoples and nations must be underlined. The significance of the Asian Cycling Championships extends far beyond the cycling events themselves. By hosting the 5th Asian Cycling Championships, Singapore has shown how nations of goodwill, though small themselves, can help to build friendships between peoples in the community of nations. It is a source of great pride and satisfaction to me and to everyone who has helped to organise the Championships to see how friendships grow and bridges of understanding being built between the many competitors who represent their countries.

To the Directors and Management of King's Hotel, may I also pay tribute for the magnanimity in making this feast possible as their contribution to the cause of cycling in particular and sports in general.

This is a social and happy occasion and substantial speech making on my part is certainly not going to contribute to whetting your appetite and boasting your cheer and with these words I thank you very much, indeed, again for your gracious presence in Singapore and at this dinner.

DATED: NOVEMBER 1, 1971.