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SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE MINISTER FOR LAW AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MR. F.W.BARKER, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 7TH SEAP GAMES AT THE NATIONAL STADIUM ON SATURDAY, SEPT.1, AT 6 P.M.

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The Council of the South-East Asia Peninsular Federation welcomes you all to this official opening of the 7th SEAP Games.

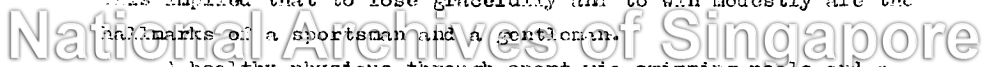
In spite of the troubles in our region the SEAP Games have continued to grow since 1959 and we are glad to have all our guests with us today. I would therefore ask my fellow citizens of Singapore to show our appreciation by extending our warmest welcome first to Burma, then Khmer, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

The SEAP Games represents the translation into concrete terms of the concept of sports meets in South-East Asia, not only to strengthen our existing friendly ties, but also to provide our athletes with a means of testing their skills, thus preparing them for the Asian and Olympic Games.

A more basic reason for the promotion of sports in the developing countries is because it is a social investment. Many countries have tended to view sports as a form of contest for national glory so much so that it has taken a political colouring and generated more ill-will than goodwill. But as a social investment the ancient Greeks had the right ideas - sports to build healthy minds and healthy bodies. Other lovers of sports went a step further and stressed character building in the word 'sportsmanship'. This implied that to lose gracefully and to win modestly are the hallmarks of a sportsman and a gentleman.

A healthy physique through sport via swimming pools and a National Stadium means less sick people and less vast and wasteful expenditure on hospitals and the assurance that individuals on whom we spend money and education and inculcation of skills, will contribute to the progress of society to the maximum possible extent.

As a regional Olympic, the SEAP Games has the further role of rallying all our countries under one banner. Despite cultural and other affinities, our countries have not been as close as they could be because of historical circumstances. But during the past one-and-a-half decades or so, we have come together often and closely enough to demonstrate2/-



to demonstrate that much can be accomplished on a regional basis and that we have much in common with one another.

Apart from catalysing sports consciousness, the SEAP Games has thus become an important means of fostering contact between the various countries, and I have no doubt that the close ties of friendship between our countries will continue to grow from strength to strength.

I have now great pleasure on behalf of the South-East Asia Peninsular Federation Council to call upon the President to declare open the 7th SEAP Games.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1973.

(Time issued: 1400 hours)

National Archives of Singapore