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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR ABDULLAH TARMUGI
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTS
AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
16th INTER -STATUTORY BOARD GAMES 2000
AT TOA PAYOH SPORTS COMPLEX ON SAT 8 APR 2000 AT 9.00
AM**

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Good morning

Mr Koh Cher Siang, Commissioner, Inland Revenue

Mr Yeo Khee Leng, CEO Singapore Tourism Board

Ms Tan Meow Hiang, Chairperson, 16th ISBG Organising Committee,

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

I am happy to join you again at this opening ceremony of yet another Inter-Statutory Board Games (ISBG). This is your 16th ISBG and it demonstrates the importance our statutory boards place on the role of sports in their organisations.

2 At the sports seminar organised by the Singapore Sports Council in January, I had outlined my Ministry's aim to make Singapore –

- a nation where sports excellence strengthens national pride
- a society where sports bonds our multi-racial community
- a people who exercise regularly and enjoy sports for a healthy lifestyle, and
- an attractive destination for the hosting of selected international sports events.

3 Given the size of your employee base and your interest in sports, our statutory boards can play an important role in helping us to achieve these objectives.

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4 More and more organisations recognise the importance of sports at the workplace. Some even set aside certain days in the year as “sports days” when staff are encouraged to come in sports attire and participate in sports activities. They recognise – as more and more organisations are beginning to – that sports and fitness activities at the workplace can foster camaraderie and facilitate better working relations among their employees. Fit and healthy employees also mean workers who are better able to cope with the stress of work and who fall sick less often.

5 Sports is also a powerful channel for fostering national pride and

community bonding in a multi-racial society. Our home-grown sports heroes like footballer Fandi Ahmad, swimmer Jocelyn Yeo, sailor Ben Tan and others, through their pursuit of sports excellence, help instil a sense of national pride in Singaporean. It brings us closer as a people because of the shared national triumphs. Singaporeans take immense pride in seeing our athletes win in regional and international competitions. Similarly, I am sure that as you cheer your colleagues on, you will also share the sense of joy and triumph when these colleagues win their respective events.

6 The ISBG is also a reflection of your strong support for sports and staff well-being. Many of the participating statutory boards have given their staff time off to train and compete in the ISBG. These statutory boards should be applauded for their commitment and dedication in promoting sports and fitness among their employees.

7 The ISBG started in 1978, with only six agencies participating in 11 sporting events. Since then, it has made a quantum leap as there are more than 4,300 staff from 31 agencies participating in 23 sporting events in this 16th ISBG Games 2000. This is testimony of the commitment, dedication and determination of those involved in making this bi-annual games a success.

8 In conclusion, let me commend the 16th Games organisers - Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, the Nanyang Technological University, the Singapore Productivity and Standards Board and the Singapore Tourism Board - for jointly organising this 16th Inter-Statutory Board Games. I urge all participants to compete in the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play. Use this opportunity to make new friends not only from within your own organisation but from other statutory boards as well. Finally, and most importantly, do enjoy yourselves. I wish this ISBG every success.

Thank you.
