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SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY  
SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AT THE  
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ASEAN WEIGHTLIFTING CON-  
FERENCE HELD ON FRIDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 1977 AT  
12 NOON AT THE HIBISCUS ROOM, SHANGRI-LA HOTEL

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Some of us, living in an urban environment, tend to lead a sedate life with little physical activities. It is not uncommon that office workers spend their working time sitting down most of the time and return home again to relax in their armchairs and watch television or to read newspapers. This type of urban life-style can make us soft. Our physique will suffer and our strength, endurance and stamina also deteriorate.

As a country committed to the promotion of sports and physical exercises, we have taken pains to plan programmes of mass participation in sports and physical exercise to counter the trend of soft living and hedonistic pursuits which have a deleterious effect on health and vigour of any society. We want more people to take part in activities which keep them fit, for fitness is the key to productivity of workers and it contributes towards the general well-being of everyone in a society, whether he is young or old, whether the person is a man or a woman. Participation in sports and games and regular physical exercises must become a habit. Only through regular physical activities can we expect to keep fit and trim. The weightlifter is one who trains seriously and systematically using weights for training to build a good physique and condition his muscles for physical fitness and good health. Weightlifting has always been and will remain a major sport and a popular one considering the fact that most community centres have weightlifting as one of their activities.

Internationally, weightlifting is recognised as an important Olympic sport. It is indeed gratifying to note that some of the lifters

from the ASEAN region have brought honour and glory to their respective nations. I am sure with systematic scientific training and with the dedication, perseverance and determination shown by the lifters of the ASEAN countries, weightlifting will surely forge ahead as an international sport to put the ASEAN region on the world map of sport. Within the ASEAN region itself, this will lead to an improvement in performance standards and popularity.

I am pleased to note that the delegates attending this Conference are prominent officials from the respective countries. Such high-powered representation indicates the support given to this Conference and the keen desire on the part of the ASEAN countries to promote weightlifting as a sport whether for competition or for the purpose of encouraging people to keep fit through this iron sport.

I like to single out for mention the presence of a few distinguished guests including the President of the Asian Weightlifting Federation, Mr Suchart Smithinunt and the Vice-President of the Federation, Mr E S Dorotheo and a few other Bureau Members of the Asian Weightlifting Federation. I understand they are here to assist in the formation of the ASEAN Weightlifting Federation. I have no doubt that this ASEAN Weightlifting Federation will become a reality and it will give a fillip to the promotion of this iron sport in the ASEAN region which besides making real our co-operative efforts in the promotion of the game, also provide the base for further development of this sport in terms of improvement in standards and popularity amongst the people of the ASEAN region.

It remains for me to congratulate the organisers of this Conference for their effort and dedication in making it such a success and to declare the ASEAN Weightlifting Conference open.

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