

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Information Division, Ministry of Culture, City Hall, Singapore 0617 • tel. 3378191 ext. 352, 353, 354/3362207/3362271

16-3/81/03/10

SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(SOCIAL AFFAIRS) AND PRESIDENT, JOGGING ASSOCIATION OF
SINGAPORE AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE FAMILIES AND
FRIENDS JOG AT THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS CONFERENCE
ROOM B ON 10 MARCH 1981 AT 11.30 AM

Jogging is Singapore's most popular participant sport. It is also the most universal. It is for everybody and anybody. The young, the old, the famous, the unknown, the rich and the not so well-off, are jogging and enjoying every moment of it.

The numbers are growing by the year and they are all after the same objective - bubbling physical fitness and good health.

Yet despite the growth of jogging and the good publicity that it receives in the mass media, there are many people who have not even thought of jogging, let alone give it a try.

This is a pity because there is no great mystery about the miracle of conditioning by exercise. The principles are very simple and they work whether we are seven or seventy years old and whether we are man, woman or child. We simply start slowly, jog regularly and gradually increase the distance that we can comfortably handle.

For those desk-bound executives and sedentary workers who do not have the courage to venture into jogging, I would like to give them this advice. They should think of training and conditioning as being like sun-bathing. With sun-bathing we must always start in a small way as otherwise our skin gets burned. Similarly, with jogging, we should start by taking little jogs for the body to get conditioned before we gradually and regularly increase our load until long distances can be covered. Novices at jogging should apply these principles so that the cardio-vascular system will adapt itself to the exercise it needs to function healthily.

Joggers are slowly creating an impart in our life style. A young generation of them is growing up, imbued with the good habit of jogging for health and fitness. We can easily recognise them by their outfits - shorts, T-shirts, track suits and those brightly coloured running shoes. I am quite confident that the jogging trend in Singapore will continue and that converts will stick to it with almost religious zeal.

In Singapore I attribute the success of jogging to the efforts of many people in all walks of life. The Ministers and the Members of Parliament for many years have played a prominent part by personally participating in flagging off jogs and giving their moral support. The Jogging Association of Singapore (JAS) is very grateful to these leaders who have devoted much of their time to be part of the jogging scene. No doubt, Members of Parliament will continue to encourage jogging in their constituencies among the masses. However, from now on the JAS will invite community leaders from all walks of life to take the lead. Hence, from time to time, musicians, executives, construction workers, hawkers, social workers, etc, will be invited to officiate at various jogs.

I would like to point out that the JAS is a major sporting organisation which has one main interest. This is to promote jogging for physical fitness. It does not compete with other sports organisations. In fact, it complements other sports promotion efforts as jogging is part and parcel of physical fitness training. If jogging for physical fitness can be a way of life, especially for our youths, then we will have a broad base for all forms of sports. This will benefit sports organisations.

So for those who have still not given any thought to join the crowd, make 1981 your break-through year and become a full-fledged jogger. It is not easy for me to define good health other than saying that it is as difficult as defining happiness. But I know for sure that the most important single indicator of health is cardiovascular endurance - the efficiency of the heart, lungs and blood circulation system - which is precisely what jogging develops.

As for those who are already joggers, I would like to urge you to strive for excellence in your activity. For a start, make a resolution this year to jog longer distances. Similarly, if you have been jogging just once a week, make an extra effort to jog twice or three times a week. I would also urge you to start training for the 1982 Marathon Jogs now and make it the greatest mass participant event in the series.