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

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SPEECH BY MR HO KAH LEONG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (EDUCATION),
AT THE SINGAPORE SCHOOLS' SPORTS COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AT THE ANGLO CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE, DOVER CLOSE
ON WEDNESDAY, 5 JANUARY 1983 AT 9.30 AM

First of all, may I wish all of you a very happy, prosperous and fruitful new year.

It is also my pleasure to welcome you to the 24th Annual General Meeting of the Singapore Schools' Sports Councils. This annual event is considered an important function as at this gathering, there is stock-taking of achievements or failures of the previous year's activities. New policies, if need be, are also introduced. It is also at this meeting that principals are reminded of their important role in developing an all-rounded educational programme for our school children.

It has always been the prime concern of the Ministry of Education to complement academic learning time with a balanced programme of physical education and a variety of sporting activities. It is universally advocated that sports not only augment the physical and physiological development of the child, but also provide opportunities for social interactions and moral reinforcements which are essential for the full development of his personality. In this respect, it is imperative that school principals must make it their responsibility to ensure that facilities are available for children under their care to develop physical, intellectual and moral powers through physical education and sports, both within the educational system and outside curriculum time.

Throughout the years, since their inception, the sports councils have organised and promoted numerous schemes to encourage children to develop their physical fitness and to allow them opportunities to attain a certain level of achievement in sports which corresponds to their gifted abilities. Recently, yet three more schemes have been launched - the Age-Group Tournaments, the

Fitness Award Scheme and the Swimming Award Scheme - all designed to foster mass participation and integration of school children and to improve their overall physical fitness. As with other massive projects, teething problems are inevitable, especially with regard to scheduling competitions for the senior divisions. But these problems can be surmounted with the support and co-operation of principals. Principals should also offer active assistance in the areas of use of facilities and the services of their teachers as officials and coaches.

Besides the promotion of sports, the usefulness of the sports councils as vehicles in helping to integrate principals, teachers and pupils has never gone unrecognised. Testimony of this is the added role vested in the sports councils to disseminate information and to obtain reactions from all principals by discussing School Council Papers at the district council meetings. This will encourage attendance of all principals at these meetings and the more informal settings may result in increased contributions of ideas and views on such papers. The Chairmen of the zone and district councils are therefore entrusted with playing an important dual-role.

I am sure you would have all heard of the Ministry's intention to establish a physical education college in 1984. You will agree that this is long over-due. With the addition of this professional institution, better trained physical education teachers can be deployed to schools to implement an effective physical education programme. The College can also help in the talent identification of potential sports men and women and provide them with the necessary guidance to attain greater heights of achievements in their fields.

Finally, I would like to wish the sports councils every success in the year's programme.