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SPEECH BY MR LEE KHOO CHOY, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF THE SINGAPORE SCHOOLS COLOURS AWARD FOR 1981 AT THE NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE AUDITORIUM ON SATURDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 1982 AT 10.00 AM

We are gathered here today to bestow awards to those who have been outstanding in sports for the year 1981. The cream of sportsmen -- 172 pupils from various schools will be awarded colours for their achievements in 17 sports. You deserved this honour for you have worked very hard for it. For those who are receiving the awards, I offer my hearty congratulations. You need more grooming to be able to win for Singapore more gold medals in international sports.

Winning awards and medals are worthy targets, but not the ultimate aim of sports. You have gone through a number of inter-school sports to reach this final event of prize giving. Looking back, it is the process of meeting fellow pupils in the field, competing with them for a ball or an inch ahead, rubbing shoulders with them and mutually exhausting yourself that make sports interesting. You get to know more friends, you treasure the spirit of the game, you know what is fair play and sportsmanship. These inter-school games have developed into a game playing tradition, which should be properly nourished. It gives our pupils in school a chance to toughen their muscles instead of becoming bookworms. It gives them an opportunity to meet one another and to test each other's strength. It is good to win but one must win with humility. If you should lose, try to be graceful, admit your weakness and try to improve. It is better to lose a hard game than winning an easy one. This is the spirit of sports.

Sports is not a matter of winning awards and medals. It helps to build one's character. It cultivates one's courage, team spirit and sportsmanship. These are qualities which come in useful when you grow up and it is your turn to be leaders of the people. When you become leaders of the various professions and society generally, you will find that courage, team spirit and sportsmanship are important ingredients of good leadership.

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