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SPEECH BY DR TAN ENG LIANG, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE SPORTS COUNCIL  
AT THE OPENING OF THE KALLANG SQUASH AND TENNIS CENTRE  
ON SATURDAY, 4 MARCH 1978 AT 4.00 PM

We are very fortunate in Singapore to have access to so many sports. Some, like soccer, hockey and rugby, were introduced just before the turn of the century and are well entrenched as popular sports today. Others like tennis and squash were introduced much later. It was only in 1970 that the Singapore Squash Rackets Association was formed. Prior to that time, there were a handful of squash players at private clubs. But outside this small squash circle, very few people have actually heard of squash, let alone seen how it is played. All this has changed. From a few the number has mushroomed to nearly 14,000 as latest participation statistics show. Tennis has slightly fewer adherents than squash but there is no denying that between them they are by far the two fastest growing sports in Singapore.

The Singapore Sports Council (SSC) encourages all sports especially those which command a large following and are easily accessible to the masses. It is also our policy to gradually provide more and better sports facilities such as swimming pools, playing fields, multi-purpose sports halls, stadiums, tennis and squash courts. The availability of adequate and upgraded facilities will contribute to an improved environment, thereby enabling our people to achieve a better quality of life. To this end, the Council is currently implementing the Master Plan on Sports Facilities (1976 to 1982) to ensure that more sports facilities are provided at strategic locations within easy reach of population centres.

This new Kallang Squash and Tennis Centre, built at a cost of \$900,000/—, is the first provision in the Master Plan. By 1982, SSC will have 115 tennis and 43 squash courts, compared to the

present 49 tennis and 20 squash courts, under its jurisdiction.

It is heartening to note that as many as 50 squash courts and 24 tennis courts are being planned in various private housing estates, condominiums and clubs. This area of development by the private sector certainly helps to relieve the congestion presently experienced at SSC's facilities. In addition, the new generation community centres are considering including squash and tennis courts as their standard facilities. If all these plans materialise, the needs of squash and tennis players will be adequately catered for and both games can be assured of uninterrupted growth.

The last 20 to 30 years have seen complex problems confronting mankind. No doubt, economic and technological changes have improved Man's lot but they have also given rise to new dangers to his health and, notably to his mental balance. In Singapore, the rapid process of industrialisation and urbanisation has brought along new problems of an urban society. This has resulted in a less active life-style.

Sport when adapted to the specific needs and abilities of the individual is a source of health and balance against a sedentary urban life. Sport gives him an opportunity to express and to surpass himself and to know more about his own physical capacity. It also helps him to extend the limits of his physical capacity. This is perhaps the most significant contribution of sport in the shaping of a new, higher quality of life.

For this reason, I am requesting all national sports associations to continue their good work in sports promotion so that more people will be drawn into sports and with it a better quality of life.

Finally, I wish to thank Pakistan International Airlines and the Singapore Squash Rackets Association for making this evening's exhibition matches possible. It is now my pleasant duty to declare the Kallang Squash and Tennis Centre open.