

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE NATIONAL SPORT FOUNDATION OF
MALAYSIA AT THE ROTHMANS PAVILION
MAHA SHOW-GROUND, PETALING JAYA
ON 2ND SEPTEMBER 1967 1967

YAB Dato' Harun, Chairman, National Sport Foundation of Malaysia,
Directors, Hon'ble Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The last time I attended a Dinner in this Pavilion I was given the honour and pleasure of presenting the award of 'Sportsman' and 'Sports-woman' of the Year.

And again to-night, I am given the great pleasure to be present at a gathering of so many eminent sportsmen, sports-women and sports-organisers, not only from Malaysia, but from many overseas countries, and it is very nice to observe the warm and friendly spirit that exists when people get together in the cause of Sport!

It is my belief that the more Sport is encouraged in the World, the more hope there will be for universal peace!

In fact, if the politicians of the World ran marathon races together instead of making marathon speeches, then perhaps peace of the World would be guaranteed!

I notice that your Foundation is run by a Board of Advice with Dato' Harun as Chairman, and Tan Sri Taib as Executive Director. I hope they give the correct advice!

Because, knowing both of them, and knowing some of the 'Sports' that they indulge in, it is fortunate that this Board of Advice is so well balanced with the Inspector General of Police, and an Army General, whom I hope will be able to discipline these two!

Otherwise, I am afraid we will have to put a wife on the Board to ensure they concentrate on the correct Sport!

However, to me more serious for a moment. The launching of this National Sport Foundation to-night is another stepping-stone in the history of our country.

The timing of this launching could not be more appropriate. Only yesterday we finished celebrating -

- Ten years of Independence;
- Ten years of Development;
- Ten years of Progress;
- Ten years of Unity;
- Ten years of Harmony;
- Ten years of Happiness;

And Ten Years of Sport in Malaysia!

During our celebrations, I was both **happy** and **proud** to see the many thousands of our people turn out for the various Parades, Cultural shows and other forms of celebration.

I could sense the feel, both in traffic jams and amongst the thousands of people walking on foot through the Lake Gardens that deep-rooted in the hearts and minds of our Malaysian people, there was the right spirit - the Sporting spirit!

Because, to me the object of Sport is not entirely to excel on the foot-ball, or hockey ground, to win cups, or to be champions.

It is more than that. It is what we learn. Learning the spirit of '**give and take**' which, if, in one's youth one has been a sportsman, and then like me you are too old to play any game except Golf, the benefit of sport remains with one, to one's dying day! The ability **to play the game**, in work, in politics or in any other activity in our lives as good Malaysian Citizens.

We are proud, not only to be a progressive Nation; we are proud to be a Sporting Nation!

At the last Asian Games in Bangkok, we as Malaysians were proud that our sportsmen brought back with them 7 Gold, 5 Silver and 6 Bronze Medals.

Medals are nice to win: but it is not always the medal or the winning that matters; it is the spirit behind the game!

And I can sum up this spirit better in Malay than I can in English:-

*Pingat Perak, Pingat Emas,
Boleh dimenangi di medan sukan,
Berbudi bahasa yang tulus ikhlas,
Itulah yang kita utamakan!*

I remember the last time I spoke in this Pavilion on the occasion of the award of 'Sportsman' and 'Sports-woman' of the year.

I quoted an English poem which fits in with the spirit of the pantun I have just given you in Malay which was something like this:-

*'And when the One Great Scorer comes
to mark against your name.
He writes **not** that you **won** or **lost** -
But **how** you played the game'.*

I also said, and I think what I said bears repetition; that I was extremely pleased now-a-days to see that Sports in Malaysia is really gaining impetus, and I believe that each and every aspect of sports has a very definite place in the mosaic of our Nation. By encouraging Sports, and it is the declared policy of the Alliance Government to encourage Sports, we are helping, not only to build up our Nation's Youth to be good sportsmen, and better Malaysians, but we are also, in the field of sport, helping to achieve the main task that lies before us, the **task of building a harmonious, unified, Nation.**

Other speakers this evening have already talked about the purpose and aims of this National Sport Foundation; so there is not need for me to repeat on the same theme, but I would like to say this, how grateful we are to Tan Sri Nik Kamil and the Rothmans Board for the unselfish and generous contribution they have made both in moral and financial support towards the formation of this Foundation.

It is launched with initial endowment of \$250,000/- from Rothmans, but I would like to appeal once again to other business and commercial organisations in the hope that they too would be forthcoming and generous, and contribute to the cause of Sport in our country by sending from time to time their donation towards the Foundation.

It is my hope, as it is the hope of all sportsmen in our country that this Foundation will really thrive and be an active instrument in not only increasing our national participation in Sports, but also, in helping to raise the standard of our Sportsmen.

This can best be done by tapping the best sporting skills in the world and inviting from time to time as our guests distinguished and accomplished sportsmen in their own field whether it be Cricket, Football, Badminton or any other game.

This Foundation has really made a start in this direction as you can see from your presence here to-night from Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, Vietnam, Pakistan, India and Denmark.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to repeat what I have said on other occasions, because I think it is relevant to-night. I

Our recent Independence celebrations of ten years progress has visibly displayed our National unity, and therefore, speaking of unity, it is the intention of the Alliance Government to encourage and assist the setting up, as a start, in each State, a Central Sporting Centre, where all Sportsmen will be able to get together and participate in their individual sport in one central area, so that the Basket Ball players, the Volley Ball players, the Football players, the Hockey players, the Sepak Raga players, and the Athletes will all be able to come to a common centre, a common focal point and play their individual games and meet and mix with each other, get to know each other, be friendly with each other and understand each other.

My government is prepared to give funds for such communal and truly Malaysian Sports Centres so that through sports we can, as I have already said achieve unity and build up a truly Malaysian spirit among our Youth.

I hope that State Governments will be generous and co-operate in this pursuit by giving land at a nominal rent.

Some States have already set up Stadiums, and I would like to see these Stadium full of people practising their various games every day, so that these Stadium do not remain a holocaust, awaiting the arrival of some Champion team to play some big game and then remain empty for several months until the next visiting team arrives.

What I would like to see is that these Stadium are put to full use and turned into active Sports Centres for our Youth, so that our young people will be attracted everyday to come and practise, be taught, and be trained, so that throughout the width and breadth of our country, every single youth who takes part in Sport has an equal chance to win the award of the "Sportsman" or "Sports-woman" of the year.