

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE OPENING OF THE FEDERATION OF
MALAYA GOVERNMENT SERVICES WELFARE
AND RECREATIONAL COUNCIL, AT KUALA
LUMPUR ON 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1961

Mr President, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured indeed to have this opportunity this afternoon in opening the 5th Annual Athletic Meet, of the Federation of Malaya Government Services Welfare and Recreational Council which was, as you all know, previously known as "The Government of Malaya Services Sports Council". Since the achievement of our Merdeka we have progressed in many fields of activities, including sports. And there is no doubt that we all are happy with the progress that we have so far achieved.

Only recently our national championship was successfully held in Malacca, and to this Meet, as you all know, came many fine athletes from our neighbouring countries. As far as this Council is concerned let us hope that by our next annual meet we shall have in addition to the athletes from the Federation and Singapore many fine sportsmen from the Borneo territories. With their participation in such annual meet in the future, I am sure it is going to be a very happy occasion to all of us.

The importance of sports needs no further emphasis. Sport is one of the best means of fostering good-will, understanding and friendliness, not only among our own athletes but also between athletes of our country and those of other friendly countries. Through the medium of sports, patience, courage and resourcefulness can be instilled into our public servants and all these qualities are naturally the few good assets amongst many others, to make our public servants efficient and alert in their day to day responsibility and administration. With the launching of the second phase of our Rural Development Programme, I am sure the services of our public servants are required more and more than ever before. With the fine qualities that sport can instill I am sure that our national projects can be carried out successfully.

Fostering sports with other countries and particularly among ourselves has been a subject close to the heart of the Government. As you all know, our Honourable Prime Minister is a sport-loving premier himself. I am also happy to say that by next year at the latest, we shall have a Sports Section in the Prime Minister's Department which will deal primarily with all sports activities in our country. I am sure that this section will give every possible assistance to this Council and also all sports councils in the country.

Now, directing our attention to the activities of the Federation of Malaya Government Services Welfare and Recreational Council itself, I am pleased to note that the Council has expanded its activities and will continue to expand them more and more.

I am also pleased to note that in addition to soccer, hockey, badminton and athletics will be included in the inter-territorial competitions. The Council has also made provision for the inclusion of more activities for the women employees in the Government services. Further provision has also been made for more opportunities for the families of the public servants to recreate themselves in their free time. All these are no doubt good signs of progress.

I would like to congratulate the officials of the Council for their excellent work in organising this big sports meet, and I hope that this council will gain strength from strength in time to come. I wish you all good luck and I trust that all participants this afternoon and the following day will enjoy yourselves and participate in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

I now have great pleasure in declaring open the Fifth Federation of Malaya Government Services Athletic Championships.