

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE APEX ZONE FOURTH CONVENTION
AT SHELLEY ROAD, KUALA LUMPUR ON
1ST SEPTEMBER, 1963

Mr. Chairman, Members of Apex from overseas, Ladies and Gentlemen,

When I was asked whether I would give the opening address at this Apex Zone Fourth Convention in Kuala Lumpur, I most willingly agreed to do so, because Apex has in a very short space of time won itself a high reputation in Malaya and Singapore, and is rapidly gaining ground elsewhere in Asia.

First, may I give the warmest possible welcome to the 150 members of Apex who have come all the way from Australia to attend this Convention and to see Apex actively at work in Malaya. For ceremony young Australians to take the time and trouble, not to mention the financial aspect, and to come to this Convention is not only a great tribute to the enthusiasm and self-denial of Apex in Australia, where the organisation was founded, but also a very great compliment to Apexians in Malaya.

The first overseas Club formed by Apex was in Singapore in 1956, only seven years ago. Since then five more Clubs have been established and are flourishing in Katong, Johore Baru, Malacca, Seremban and here in Kuala Lumpur. I understand that representatives of all these Clubs are here this morning, and I am sure they will join with me most heartily in a welcome to their brother Apexians from Australia.

I am also very happy to see that Apexians are here as observers from India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Japan. Their presence is another tribute to the response the ideals of Apex—fellowship through service and service through fellowship—have aroused in other Asian countries. There is no doubt that the opportunity Apex

affords for young men to serve their fellow men has great appeal. To Apexians here from elsewhere in Asia I extend on behalf of Malaya a most warm and cordial welcome.

To all Apexians who have visited Malaya before I hope you will have another happy sojourn here, and to all those who are visiting Malaya for the first time I hope you will take the opportunity to see as much of our country as possible and to understand the dynamic sense of change that is taking place in Malaya.

As Minister of Rural Development, I am primarily responsible for the healthy progress of our Second Five-Year Plan, and I may say that there is hardly a single aspect of our economic, social, commercial and educational life that has not felt the impact of the Plan. For a small country like ours to set out on a vast programme costing 5000 million dollars is a very ambitious task, and I am happy to say that having passed the half-way mark we are up to schedule, and in many aspects of the Plan ahead of schedule. This simple statement expresses in a nut shell what I mean by the remarkable changes taking place in Malaya.

All this constant activity and impetus would not be possible without the full co-operation of the people in every sphere of life. I am glad to say that the Five-Year Plan has stimulated many voluntary organisations to even greater efforts than they have achieved before. Our people, particularly those in the rural areas where the need is greatest, have learned that there is a great personal satisfaction to be gained by doing something for the Plan. For voluntary bodies, this often means pitching in during spare time and days off, either in practical construction on the ground, or by raising funds in various ways to see that special projects are carried out.

I am very happy to say that Apex is a splendid example of what is possible through voluntary service. I am particularly pleased to know that one of the highlights of this Convention will be the official opening of the Apex-Loo Goat Farm at Sungei Buloh Leprosarium in a few days time. This goat farm, designed to provide an economic livelihood for cured lepers, is not only an imaginative

idea but also a very practical one. It will not only be a great asset to the Leprosarium as a source of earning money but it will also provide training in animal husbandry for the patients there. I am sure there is not a single Apexian who has helped to build this Farm, either by raising money or by personal toil, who will not feel a genuine thrill of pride on seeing this project completed and operating as a going concern. I offer to all Apexians my warmest congratulation on this splendid achievement.

It is with the greatest pleasure, therefore, that I declare open this Apex Zone Fourth Convention, and in doing so to offer not only the thanks of the nation but also the good wishes of all Malayans for greater prosperity and success to Apex everywhere.