

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
AT THE OPENING OF THE MALAYSIA SPORTS  
FESTIVAL TRACK AND FIELD MEET AT THE  
STADIUM MERDEKA, KUALA LUMPUR ON  
12TH SEPTEMBER, 1963

Dato' Chairman, Your Excellencies, Hon'ble Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Athletes of Malaysia,

As President of the Federation of Malaya Olympic Council I am very pleased indeed to be present here today to declare open the Federation of Malaya Amateur Athletic Union's Track and Field Meet which is their contribution to the Sports Festival celebrating the birth of Malaysia.

Everywhere in Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah the people are looking forward eagerly to honour in every way they can the establishment of Malaysia. This Sports Meeting is the gesture of all the athletes of Malaysia for this great national occasion. I would like to say at once that all the arrangements made are most appropriate for the Malaysia festivities, as this is the first time men and women athletes of all the component parts of Malaysia are taking part in a sports competition of their own.

The Federation of Malaya is very happy to be the host, and on behalf of all Malayan sportsmen, and indeed of all Malaysians, I extend a very warm and friendly welcome to all the men and women competitors from Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah. I am told that the response to the invitations to take part is very good indeed as we can see from the splendid march past we have just witnessed. This shows that the athletes of Malaysia are themselves very keen to compete with one another in track and field events as fellow Malaysians.

The fact that you are so eager to do so is of particular interest to me, as this athletic meet indicates the pattern of things to come. When Malaysia is established, the amateur athletic

unions will be taking action to come together in one body, so that instead of participating in international events in future as separate entities, they will compete, not for Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah, but all together as one for Malaysia. Quite obviously the wider range of talents and skill available in Malaysia should give the selectors every opportunity to choose a strong team for the Olympic Games in Tokyo next year.

I do not doubt that every Malaysian athlete, particularly the star performers, will be going all out from now on for the honour of being chosen in the Malaysian team at Tokyo. Although the Olympic Games are more than a year away. Much hard training will be necessary, and the athletic meets to be held in various parts of Malaysia during the next nine months or so will be very interesting to watch.

In these two days you will be striving hard to run faster, leap higher and further, and throw greater distances than before I have every confidence that the athletes of Malaysia will make this meeting a record-breaker. I hope that while you are in Kuala Lumpur you will enjoy yourselves to the full both on and of the field, renewing old friendships and making new ones as you do so.

Wishing the competitors from all over Malaysia the best of success, I take very great pleasure now in declaring open this Track and Field Meet in honour of Malaysia.

Merdeka Malaysia!