

SPEECH BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE OPENING OF STADIUM NEGARA, KUALA LUMPUR ON 19TH APRIL, 1962

Sebagai Pengerusi Jemaah Pengelola Stadium Merdeka dan Stadium Negara, saya dengan perasaan kesyukuran yang penuh menyambut keberangkatan Duli-Duli Yang Maha Mulia Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Dipertuan Agong¹ dan Raja Permaisuri Agong, Duli-Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan dan Tunku Ampuan Selangor serta kehadiran Yang Teramat Mulia Tunku Perdana Menteri dan dif-dif yang terhormat pada temasya yang gilang-gemilang di dalam sejarah permainan sports di Negeri ini, iaitu istiadat pembukaan resmi Stadium Negara. Pada 30hb Ogos, 1957, iaitu sehari sebelum kita mencapai Kemerdekaan, Yang Teramat Mulia Tunku Perdana Menteri telah mengistiharkan pembukaan Stadium Merdeka. Lima tahun lepas dari itu kita telah sampai kepada suatu lagi tingkatan kemajuan di dalam lapangan sports iaitu pembukaan Stadium Negara.

Today, this formal opening of the Stadium Negara is a happy and memorable occasion in the history of sports in this country.

I say so because Their Majesties the Yang Dipertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong, whose interest in the sporting life of our nation is well known to us all are honouring this new chapter in the history of Malayan Sports by their gracious presence. Also Their Highnesses the Sultan and the Tunku Ampuan are honouring this occasion. We thank Their Majesties and Their Highnesses most sincerely for their gracious compliment to our sport-loving people in being here today.

On your behalf, too, I would like to welcome the Honourable the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra. For more than any one in this country, the Tunku has done the most in the field of sports. It is his **inspiration** and encouragement that sparked off the idea of an indoor stadium and turned it into a concrete reality. He, therefore, deserves the gratitude not only of the sports-loving Malaysians but of the whole country and the whole nation.

1 Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail.

However, knowing him as I do, I think I can detect a quiet smile of satisfaction that today marks another forward step in Malayan Sports.

The **Tunku**, despite all his widespread range of interest in buildings and architecture, is not a builder, or an architect or an **engineer**—not as yet anyway. Therefore, he has to rely on others to see that his bright ideas are carried out. On this occasion I wish to pay particular tribute and a tribute which is well deserved, to one who I may describe as the **Tunku's** co-conspirator. I refer to that brilliant engineer, Mr S. L. Jewkes, the Director of Public Works. He is the man who is responsible for the design and construction of this stadium. He is also the man who was the **Tunku's** right-hand in carrying out the design and construction of the Merdeka Stadium. The Stadium **Negara** was a great challenge to any designer, as it incorporates and overcomes many technical difficulties, and presents original features which are quite new in architecture. You will find all the design and* structural considerations realised in this building set out in the Souvenir Programme, and anyone who studies these facts will readily understand that Mr Jewkes and his team have successfully carried out a very formidable task. I do not think there is anyone here who will not agree with me that they have done a wonderful job, and created a noble and beautiful stadium.

Mr Jewkes will be leaving us on retirement in a few days time. On behalf of the Board of Control of which he has been a member ever since it was first established, I would like to thank him for the services he has rendered to this country. These two Stadium will remain monuments of his great work which will always be remembered for generations in this country. I wish him happiness and success wherever he may be.

I would also **like** to thank very much indeed the other **P.W.D.** officers who worked with Mr Jewkes in the creation of this stadium, on the design side, **Encik Ng Eng Hean**. On the construction side Mr M. D. **Canavan**, Encik Koon Yew Yin and Encik S. **Nakendra**. The quantity surveying was done by Mr W. J. **mming**. The construction of the stadium was a remarkable exercise of coordination from start to finish; fifteen principal contractors and hundreds of skilled workers and labourers, not to mention four of our local artists, have all played a part in

making the Stadium Negara the splendid building that you see today. I thank each and everyone of them **for** the fine work they have done. I would also like to thank the Art Council for organising the competition for the excellent mural paintings in the Stadium.

Finally, to celebrate this happy occasion in a fitting manner a special programme has been arranged. I wish to express my gratitude to **Encik** Toh Seng **Yan** and the Entertainment Committee; Radio Malaya for its orchestra and singers, "**Puspa Aneka**" under the direction of Encik Ahmad **Marican**; the National Association of Women's Institutes for their contribution and finally, the famous badminton players from home and abroad who have agreed to give exhibition matches this evening before the commencement of the Asian Badminton Championship on Saturday, when the Stadium Negara will be officially used for a major sporting event for the first time.

The Board of Control hopes that Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, the Prime Minister, all our Distinguished Guests, all **those** who worked on the Stadium and all members of the general public will enjoy yourselves at this official opening of the Stadium **Negara**. Thank you very much indeed.

I will now call on the Honourable Prime Minister, **Tunku** Abdul Rahman, to speak.