

**SPEECH BY Y.A.B. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
IN HONOURING THE SPORTSMAN AND SPORTSWOMAN
OF THE YEAR AT M.A.H.A
ON 22ND JULY 1967**

**‘Sportsman of the year and Sportswoman of the year’, Cabinet Colleagues,
Ladies & Gentlemen,**

Firstly, I should like all of you to join me in congratulating Mr. as ‘Sportsman’ of the year, and Miss. as ‘Sportswoman’ of the year. When I presented the awards a few moments ago, I did so with both pleasure and envy.

Pleasure because this is a great occasion to-night, the first time in Malaysia that we have recognised both a ‘Sportsman’ and a ‘Sportswoman’ of the year.

Pleasure also because to-night here we have a truly national gathering of all sportsman of our country, and I feel deep within my heart that not only is our country Malaysia becoming increasingly **sports-conscious**, but also we are taking steps towards putting Malaysia on the ‘Sporting Map’ of the world! This gives me pleasure!

What makes me envious is that these two to-night, our ‘hero’ and our ‘heroine’, in addition to the award I had the honour to present, will also be given the opportunity of going overseas to a place, chosen by their respective associations, to learn and practise even more, the sport in which they have already admirably excelled themselves!

I am envious because not only am I too old now to participate in sports and come up to their standard, and even if I had been able to win this award, being married as I am, my wife would never let me go overseas **alone** to sport myself!

So, therefore, I myself and those of us sitting at this top table have got to be resigned to the fact that we can never win this award.

Our days of youth have gone, our days of active athletics are finished, and we are now in the same category as my colleague, the Minister of Youth, Culture and Sports, we have to forget our youth and resign ourselves like Encik Senu, to Golf and ‘Indoor games!’

When we talk about Sports and Sportsmanship I find it is a very difficult subject to define.

My colleague, the Minister of Finance, when he goes out in the jungle with a rifle to murder a tiger, he calls it ‘Sport’, but if per chance he does not shoot the tiger, and the tiger turns on him, he says it is not ‘sporting’, but ‘ferocious!’.

How then do you define ‘Sports’?

And, now for a moment I would like to talk not as Deputy Prime Minister, but as Chairman of the Olympic Council.

In many countries, there are ‘Sporting Customs’, and as Chairman of several athletic associations in Malaysia, I would like to appeal to the Minister of

Finance, and say that our 'Customs' in this country are not always sporting!

You will be suprised where I got this information from!

When I was talking to the Chairman of the National Sports Foundation, Dato' Harun, and the Captain of a visiting Vietnam Football Team, I was informed that some of our 'Customs' were not 'sporting', particularly, those at Subang Airport!

My Cabinet Colleague, Che Senu, in his speech, mentioned that the 'suspense' in waiting for the announcement of the awards, was like a **James Bond** film.

James Bond films are very popular, and Finance Ministers could be equally as popular; in fact, any Finance Minister could be given an award of the greatest 'Sporting man' of the year, if he is prepared to forget Sports **equipment** in his Budget Speech, and allow all sports equipment to be given free of tax, out of '**bond**'!

What I would particularly like about to-night is not only have we recognised the 'Sportsman' and Sportswoman' of the year, but we have also recognised the individual champions of each section of Sport within our country, those who before my speech this evening, received a 'Medallion' in recognition as being the outstanding representative of each individual sport.

I would like to suggest, however, that in future years, there should be a **third** major award in addition to the 'sportsman' and 'sports-woman' of the year, and award to the person who has put the most effort into the game. He may not be a winner! He may not be a champion! He may not even be a competitor!

I would like this award be given in the spirit of a poem I remember from my school-days:-

*'And when that One Great Scorer comes to
mark against your name,*

*He writes **not** that you **won** or **lost** -*

But how you played the game'.

I am 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.**

Looking around to-night I am particularly pleased to see the seating arrangement at this Dinner.

You are all grouped to-night by Sports, irrespective of race or place, irrespective of age or sex. In fact, to-night this gathering is truly representative of what the Malaysia of the present and the future **must be - A Nation** of Malaysian people living together, working together and playing together, in complete unity and harmony!

Here to-night, we gather together all, Malaysians talking the common language, the 'Language of Sport', - this is the 'Language of Youth', - this is the 'Language of Unity'!

It is my hope that those of you responsible for organising the many kinds of Sport in our country, will get together and work together.

I am sure that you will be given the fullest co-operation from each and every State Government to work out plans for **unified** Sports Centres throughout the country.

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 Stadiums full of people practising their various games **every day**, so that these Stadiums 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 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 Sportswoman**' of the year which I presented to-night.

And, finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I smoke my own particular brand of cigarette, unfortunately, I do not smoke **Rothmans!**, but nevertheless, I would like to pay a tribute to Rothmans to-night for the effort, and energy that they have put in to form a Sports Foundation, and I think that they have been unselfish because in fact the true sporting man, under strict training should not smoke, and therefore, Rothmans contribution to sports cannot be viewed as a selfish intention of increasing their sales of tobacco!

I hope that many other commercial organisations in the private sector will join together with Government and give as large contribution as they can, in cash or in kind, towards this Sports Foundation so that we can build up a really viable National Sports Fund.

I should like to thank all of you who have taken the trouble, time and energy to organise this excellent evening, and finally, let me give a message to every single sporting youth in our country. My message is **this:-**

'You too, no matter where you are in Malaysia can be the 'Sportsman' or the 'Sports-woman' of the year, on one condition, and that is, that you try hard enough, train hard enough, never give up and do not be discouraged by

minor set-backs, because if, in this world we live in - if there were no failures, there will be no triumphs. The **greater** the difficulty the **more glory** in surmounting it.'

Skilful pilots gain their reputations from storms and tempests. So it is with Sportsmen.

If you believe a thing is impossible, your doubt will make it so; but if you persevere you can and will overcome every difficulty - And win!