

SIARAN AKHBAR

MENGENAI

**'CONFERENCE OF PHYSICAL
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION'**

OLEH

AMINUDDIN BAKI

16 DISEMBER 1963

PUSAT SUMBER INSTITUT AMINUDDIN BAKI (IAB)	
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SIARAN AKHBAR

DI-TERBITKAN OLEH JABATAN PENERANGAN MALAYSIA

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Speech of the Chief Education Adviser, Enche Aminuddin Baki, at the opening of the Second Annual Conference of the Physical Education Association of Malaya today, 16th December, 1963, at the Specialist Teacher Training Institute, Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

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There is a Malay saying "Bidan Terjun" referring to the midwife being summoned at the last hour to perform a pleasant duty and although my attendance here this morning is not fully similar in circumstances but all the same as "Bidan Ganti", a substitute, I feel privileged to be asked to open this your Second Annual Conference especially to meet our fellow Malaysian educators from Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore whose presence is most significant as this truly is the first conference where educators from all the Malaysian areas are represented. I thank you all for this honour and I hope that I will be able to justify this honour of standing in for both your illustrious Ministerial Patron and our own Minister of Education.

I must congratulate the members of your Association for holding this Annual Conference of Specialist Teachers of Physical Education. The effort of your Association is the more creditable because as far as I am aware yours is the only formal group bringing together Specialist Teachers in any one field with the aim of promoting their own speciality and in your own case of promoting the teaching of Physical Education in our schools developing a national system of Physical Education. Your President just now has expressed the hope that the Ministry would expand the Federal Inspectorate and establish the post of Area Organisers so that the teaching of special subjects including Physical Education could be given proper supervision. The Ministry, I am happy to say, has this very programme in mind and at present it is considering the establishment of a local inspectorate of school and a proper cadre of organisers of school for this purpose amongst others. At the same time the Ministry has reorganised its Teacher Training programmes and one of the main tasks at present being undertaken resulting from this reorganisation is the introduction of one year supplementary courses in the teaching of specific subjects. You will note therefore the regard and importance the Ministry of Education is giving towards the teaching of specific subjects by specialist teachers and thereby it hopes to raise further the standard of education.

It is platitude to say a healthy mind in a healthy body, a strong and progressive nation through healthy children. It is this realisation that has led physical and health education to find itself a permanent place as a core subject at all levels of our school system. However despite this provision there is still the need to review the teaching of physical and health education in our schools. The syllabuses certainly require review; health education for example which is taught indirectly in our schools except as an optional Health Science subject at the upper secondary level requires at the same time greater emphasis. I have noted that your Association itself considers such a review as necessary and I feel sure your reason for this does not differ much from the reason I have in my own mind, and that is that we have to develop a system of physical and health education of our own which not only would serve to meet the physical and environmental needs of our rising generations but also would assist in the preservation and sustenance of the cultures of our different peoples.

I say that such a system should meet the physical and environmental needs of our pupils because it is evident that health education or hygiene should be given more emphasis and be directly taught as a subject throughout the school years. In this manner schools therefore could play their role more effectively in bringing about a re-orientation in the attitude of the people - through our pupils - towards causes of diseases - thus effecting the maxim 'prevention is better than cure'.

That such a system should also be a means of preserving and sustaining the growth of our cultures in keeping with one of the cardinal principles of our educational policy because it surely has been obvious to you as specialists that we follow too closely than desirable the Western system of Physical Education. The fact that your Association was established out of an awareness in regard to the need to establish a Malayan system of Physical Education is something that I must here congratulate you.

In reconstructing our young nation and striving to search for our own Malaysian identity befitting with our status as a sovereign nation the establishment of a Malaysian system of education including that of Physical Education is most essential. In your own field of speciality for example the three major communities forming our population has each its own traditional ways of keeping healthy, strong and even beautiful. In saying beautiful it reminds me of a Malay pantun describing how a beautiful lady should look like - in other words what should be the vital statistics, however not by tape and measure but by simile and metaphoric description as:

Rambut-nya ikal mayang
Kening lentek laksana taji dibentok
Mata-nya juling ayer
Hidong-nya manehong
Leher-nya jenjang
Dada-nya bidang
Pinggang-nya ramping
Betis-nya saperti bunting padi.

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How to become beautifully so was prescribed by means of physical movements and exercises, by swinging the arms to have the chest broad and well formed, by standing and walking on one's toes in order to have slender waist line, and exercise the legs in order to have Betty Grable calf. For the men, there are such forms of physical exercises as the foot movement and other bodily exercise of the bersilat to make oneself alert, strong and quick in mind and body.

The Chinese on the other hand have their well-known bodily jerks and exercises, foot and hand movements associated with the Kuntow and particularly those associated with the Tai Chi Chuan while their own form of sword and spear display - the Chien Fah and Chian Fah - in the same manner as the Japanese has adopted in their Kendo for their school pupils, be adapted as another form of Physical Education befitting our cultural characteristics.

The Indians have their own form of physical education to train the body and also to train the mind. In this respect I do not, as a newspaper reporter once attributed me to have done, suggest the introduction of Yoga into our schools because by then we might have both teachers and pupils sitting serenely and passively in a posture oblivious to the world surrounding them contrary to all principles of teaching and educational psychology. To be serious the Indians have their own method of self-defence method known as Silampattam using a long stick in the style of Friar Tuck of Robin Hood fame. This too if introduced could make our Physical Education not only more varied in form but also culturally beneficial.

Although I cannot give specific examples our Malaysian brothers the Kadazans, Dyaks, Muruts, Kadayans and the Dusuns, etc., I feel certain have a lot to offer which we can adapt to enrich our Malaysian system of Physical Education.

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And to top all this all our own cultures are rich with folk dances and games which can be easily incorporated into our own national system of Physical Education more than had been done as hitherto. I will remember the occasion when our school girls were first trained to learn folk dancing for the Merdeka Children's Rally, something new to them, as only then for such an occasion they danced only Western folk dances. I am glad to know that a start made then had now materialised as could be seen during the Children's Rally at the Malaysia Celebration recently when I am sure it was a joy to all those present to see our school girls whether they are Malay, Chinese, Indians, Eurasians and others danced together the Malay, Chinese, Indians and Western folk dances. This I would say is the beginning of an integrated Malaysian culture which our school has to introduce and to start.

What I personally would like very much to see is development of a Malaysian system of education including Physical Education which will take into account the following general principles:-

- (a) retaining those aspects of the present system which we inherited through historical accidents, which we find suitable and compatible with our growth and progress as a nation;
- (b) not hesitating to discard any aspect which we find incompatible towards our growth, social and cultural and which we consider as undermining our national identity;
- (c) broadening our horizon by learning from countries other than those to which during the pre-independence era we were made to attach ourselves to and to no other. In this way we enrich our system by adopting whatever are found suitable, thus it will help our own growth and progress. In this respect I must congratulate your Association for having maintained contact already with your counterparts in other parts of the world for example by becoming a member of the International Council of Health, Physical Education and an international member of the World Confederation and Organization of the Teaching Profession.
- (d) adapting the system of others not just blindly but in accordance with our own financial means for example it could be wrong for us just because in the West they have physical education in a gymnasium then here too we must do the same forgetting the fact that here in Malaya as a country of eternal sunshine and not snow we can always have our physical education in the open and put up our apparatus, etc. accordingly;
- (e) incorporating into our national system something of our own cultures from our own rich traditional and cultural past which have been almost submerged by passage of time through neglect or through acculturation.

By so doing we would thus establish a system of our own by adapting what are best from the experience of the more advanced countries while at the same time preserving and sustaining the growth of our own traditions and cultures.

In as much as that we are today politically free as a nation it is our role and duty as educators of the young to bring about freedom in the field of education and culture, as it would be most ironical if we are only free politically but still yoked culturally.

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In order to achieve freedom in culture for which we as educators are the guides and the main agents, the Ministry of Education has started a review into the common content syllabuses which as you are well aware was formulated in a hurry in 1956. In this review the Ministry has wherever applicable and possible guided itself by the four principles I have mentioned earlier. The topics of your present Conference which is the teaching of Physical Education with reference to the Ministry's Syllabuses is therefore most timely. Your ideas and suggestions on the Physical Education syllabuses are therefore welcome. In the field of building the nation through education you the specialist teachers and we the educational administrators have a common duty and task to perform and a common challenge to overcome. It is in the hope of receiving concrete suggestions from your Association and continued cooperation in future that I now have great pleasure in declaring open this Second Annual Conference of your Persatuan Pendidikan Jasmani.

KUALA LUMPUR,

16hb Disember, 1963. (di-umumkan pada pukul 6.30 petang)

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