

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE OPENING OF THE MEETING OF ASIAN FIFA
REFEREES, KUALA LUMPUR ON 6 AUGUST, 1960.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Once again on the occasion of the big national Football Festival in the Federation of Malaya, it is my privilege to attend and open this meeting of Asian FIF A Referees.

I understand it is your intention to have a specialised discussion on various aspects of the laws of refereeing football, with a representative from each country taking his turn to lead the discussion. This is a very good idea, as it should certainly stimulate interest, not only amongst yourselves but as a result of your meeting a spread of interest among referees in your own countries.

I am quite sure this will happen, because of the simple fact that referees in Asia are keen to improve standards and keen to take a leading part among referees. Today no Asian referees are chosen for big games in Europe, but with the high standards you will attain by your keenness I am certain that one day we will see Asians refereeing at the Olympic Games.

I would like you to know that Asian referees today have already won themselves a good reputation. I am given to understand that the opinion in Europe of Asian referees today is very high, and that Sir Stanley Rous, that Doyen of football, has stated that organisations in Europe would have no hesitation whatever in appointing Asian referees. That compliment is the result of your own good work.

This leads me to think that the time has come for a more positive and generally accepted policy for refereeing throughout Asian football. It would not be a good thing if the various units of our great and popular game tended to branch out on their own. I hope, therefore at the FIF A meeting tomorrow that there will be a discussion on a policy for the recruitment and training of referees. If such a policy is adopted it is bound to have beneficial effects throughout the Asian football world, and will help to raise the standards of refereeing even higher than they are.

I hope, therefore, that you will do everything you can - in fact, I am sure you will - to

improve the study and knowledge of refereeing and inspire other sportsmen to train themselves to be referees of high standard.

I have very much pleasure indeed now in declaring this meeting of Asian FIFA Referees open.