

Paddlers hope for better results in SEA Games

KUALA LUMPUR: The national table tennis squad is hoping for a better show in the SEA Games here compared to their last outing in Brunei in 1999.

The Table Tennis Association of Malaysia's (TTAM) president, Datuk Chan Fook Choy, said that even in the presence of raging favouritism in Singapore, the Malays should be able to put an improved performance.

"We (will) try our best. Our paddlers did quite well last time. We have yet to set a target for medals but certainly we should do better than in previous SEA Games," said Kong Choy after witnessing the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the TTAM and INTI College here yesterday.

Under the MoU, INTI College is to offer scholarship to more than RM40,000 each to national table tennis players Jason Shim Poh Yen and Linjing.

Kong Choy said that both the national men's and women's teams were undergoing intensive training at the Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex to prepare for the SEA Games.

In Brunei, Malaysia won a bronze medal through the men's team.

Recently, the national women's team scored several international achievements, including a second placing in the Commonwealth Championships in New Delhi in April.

Early this month, the team gained promotion to Division One for the first time in the World Championship in Osaka. They are now ranked 18th in the world.

Kong Choy said although the Malaysian women's team would be without China-born Linjing in the SEA Games, they still had able hands in the Beh sisters, Lee Fong and Li Wei.

He added that the women's team would go for a training stint in China one month before the Games.

On the men's team, Kong Choy said that Malaysia was not pinning high expectations because the team comprised young blood who lacked international experience.

"However from the reports that I received, they are performing well."