

23 JAN 1996
Badminton-Abdullah
BAM TO LAUNCH CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 23 (Bernama) -- Malaysian badminton is set to enter a new era with the launching of a club championship soon that is open to local and foreign players.

Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) President Datuk Dr Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan said today the championship was open to private clubs, companies and other organisations.

"We want to create more competition for local players who are not in the national team. This way, we will keep those not selected to remain competitive," he said after a BAM exco meeting here.

The meet is also open to professional clubs like Nusa Mahsuri and Wira Tangkis and they are allowed to rope in national or any foreign players.

Abdullah also announced the new national team which saw the exclusion of P. Kantharopan, Davincy Saha, Wong Ewe Mun and Koo Yong Chut.

Roslin Hashim, the only BAM player in the recent SEA Games squad, retained his position along with Ismail Saman and All-England semifinalist Lo Ah Heng.

SEA Games gold medallists Cheah Soon Kit and Yap Kim Hock remain as the top pair, backed up by Yap twins Yee Hup and Yee Guan, Chung Tan Fook/Lee Wan Wah and Rosman Razak/Chew Chun Eng.

Abdullah said although the team was trimmed down, the players' rankings would be reviewed from time to time based on their performances in international tournaments and national trials.

"We might not hold the trial every four months as it is now. We want them to do well in international meets...some players only prepare for the trials...we want to keep them on their toes," he said.

On the players dropped, Abdullah said they would be given a second chance if they proved their worth in local tournaments, adding that their welfare was taken care of as they have jobs with several companies.

Abdullah also announced that Nusa Mahsuri's Rashid Sidek, Ong Ewe Hock, Pang Chen and Yong Hock Kin have been selected for the Thomas Cup qualifying round in New Zealand next month.

However, there are no singles players from the BAM camp as Roslin was dropped from the Thomas Cup squad while the doubles pairs comprise Soon Kit/Kim Hock, Wira Tangkis' Soo Beng Kiang/Tan Kim Her and newcomers Tan Fook/Wan Wah.

Chief coach Razif Sidek and his brother Misbun will handle the team, said Abdullah. The team will train for a week before leaving for New Zealand.

On the TUKOM players who are being groomed for future assignments, Abdullah said the 20 selected boys will report for training on Feb 2 while the girls' team under the same project will also serve as the national team.

He said the budget for the TUKOM project is RM1.2 million a year while RM700,000 will be used for the national team.

Abdullah said Pang Cheh Chang was included in the TUKOM project although he is above 21 years because BAM wanted to develop him as a doubles specialist.

TUKOM Project

Men: Wong Choon Hann, Jason Wong, Poh Yong Siang, Mahathir Mustaffa,

Foo Kiang Kheng, Ng Kean Kok, Yap Yong Jyen, Sydney Michael, Hoo Kim Loong, Yong Cheng Foo, Ramesh Nathan, Lee Chee Leong, Cheah Soon Thoe, Chan Kim Wai, Khoo Boo Hock, Jeremy Valberg, Tanabalan, Fazli Mohd Aris, Song Weng Yee, Pang Cheh Chang.

Women: Chan Chia Fong, Kuak Sieok Choon, Ishwari Boopathy, Geevien Saha, Norhashikin Amin, Winnie Lee, Lee Yin Yin.

Uber Cup

Chan Chia Fong, Ishwari Boopathy, Geevien Saha, Winnie Lee, Kuak Sieok Choon, Norhashikin Amin, Law Pei Pei, Lim Pek Siah, Chor Hooi Yee. --
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