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Veterans among eight shown the door

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EIGHT players have been dropped from the backup squad at a time when frugality is at a premium, especially when the BA of Malaysia (BAM) have lost 50 per cent of their sponsorship ringgit.

After sponsors EON and Proton had announced they would halve their RM4 million budget, BAM met all the trainees in the senior and backup squad last Thursday before announcing to the players the bad news.

The cut may not end there as BAM have also warned that a few more players who failed to live up to expectations may also be dropped at the end of the year.

There were a few surprises among the eight players shown the door - five singles and three doubles players.

Among the singles players were veteran P. Kantharoopan, former All-England semifinalist Lo Ah Heng, Foo Yong Keang, Mahathir Mustaffa and Allan Tai.

The doubles players axed were Koo Boo Hock, Tan Soo Seng and Yap Wee Meng.

While the axing of Kantharoopan and Lo was widely expected, the fact that shuttlers like Mahathir and Yap were shown the door was a surprise as both were successful at the recent Malaysia Games.

However, BAM explained that the players were dropped because they had failed to show improvement in their form in training in the past one year.

The eight shuttlers did not join yesterday's training session but will only be officially out of the team at the end of the month.

Veteran players like Wong Ewe Mun and Pang Cheh Chang will now be under pressure to perform although they are slotted for the mixed doubles for the Commonwealth Games in September.

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