

Simulated finals held to sharpen Sukma shooters

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Sabah's shooting squad during their training session.

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah will send 11 shooting athletes to the 22nd Malaysia Games (Sukma) in Selangor, with the young squad sharpening their mental strength and competitive routines ahead of the national meet.

The team comprises seven rifle and four pistol athletes who have been undergoing intensive training, including simulated finals for the 10-metre air rifle and air pistol events.

According to the Sabah Shooting Association (SSA), the simulations are aimed at familiarising the athletes with the atmosphere and situations they could face in the finals.

Eight athletes took part in the latest training session. The association said the athletes remained fully focused without allowing the training atmosphere to become overly tense or stressful.

"The coaches constantly remind the athletes not to focus on scores or results, but on executing the correct techniques and shooting process," it said.

Among the athletes preparing for Sukma is 17-year-old Chenny Herman of SMK Kinarut, who is also sitting for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination this year.

She said her preparations had progressed well, with the most significant improvements seen in her technical consistency and ability to maintain focus while shooting.

"I am also placing greater emphasis on mental preparation so that I can remain calm and not be easily affected by the situation during competition," she said.

Chenny said her biggest challenge was maintaining consistency and concentration under pressure, particularly when her performance did not go as expected.

She also has to carefully divide her time between training and preparing for the SPM examination.

"I try to overcome it by managing my time as well as possible, discussing matters with my coaches and focusing on what needs to be done at that particular moment.

"I have learned not to dwell too much on mistakes that have already happened, but to focus on what comes next," she said.

Chenny hopes to deliver her best performance and contribute a medal to Sabah.

"Representing Sabah is a source of pride because I am carrying the name of the State, as well as the efforts of my coaches, family and everyone who has supported me," she said.

Team captain Briana June Daya, 20, a Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) student, is equally confident that her preparations will enable her to perform well in Selangor.

She said maintaining her mental and emotional well-being had been a priority throughout training to ensure her physical condition was not affected.

Briana experienced pressure while sitting for her final examinations last month as she had to divide her time between revision and intensive training.

"Since the semester break began, I have felt relieved because I can now concentrate fully on training," she said.

She aims to give her best until the final shot in what will be her last Sukma appearance.

"This opportunity to represent Sabah in shooting is very precious to me, especially as this will be my final Sukma.

"I am grateful for the trust placed in me by the coaches, team manager and Sabah Sports Council, which has allowed me to compete on the Sukma stage for the final time," she said.

Sukma Selangor 2026 will be held from Aug 15-24, featuring 37 sports and 474 medal events, including shooting.