



Asyraaf

Five dropped from national women's football team

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KOTA KINABALU: As expected, five players were dropped as the national women's football squad prepare for the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games later this month.

Head coach Mohd Asyraaf Fong Abdullah said the finalised squad comprise 20 players who will compete in the region's premier multi-sport events.

The footballers are goalkeepers Asma Junaidi, Roszaini Bakar, Nurul Azurin Mazlan; defenders Nurathirah Farhanah Zairi, Malini Nordin, Mira Fazliana Aidil, Shereilynn Elly, Usliza Usman; midfielders Jaciah Jumilis, Masturah Majid, Haindee Mosroh, Norsuriani Mazli, Dadree Rofinus, Eslilah Esar, Nor Athirah Mamat, Norshahira Suhaime and strikers Nur Haniza Saarani, Puteri Noralisa Wilkinson, JI. Fedalliah Claritta Jaimin and Angela Kais.

The five who missed out on SEA Games berth included three defenders Marcella Angela Parais of Sabah, Nabila Naim (PDRM) and Nurulhusna Mohd Nazri (Kedah) as well as midfielder Nur Syazwina Shuib (Kedah) and striker Siti Rohayu Saptu (Sarawak).

Meanwhile, Asyraaf in a text message yesterday preferred to look at the positive side following their 0-2 defeat to South Asian champions India in their pre-SEA Games warm up game.

"We are able to identify areas that still need to be improved including working on the squad transition play from defending into attacking...to make it smoother and effective.

"Apart from that, we need to be tighter at the back especially stopping attacking moves from the flank and to find a better way to execute goal kicks as these led to (India's) first goal in the international friendly.

"In midfield, we need to be better at switching the plays and to make crucial passes into the final third of the pitch because we have players like Fedalliah, Nur Haniza and Dadree who can beat their markers in the area," he said.

Towards this end, Asyraaf said the national women's team will take on Singapore at UiTM Stadium on August 9, which will be their last match before fully focusing on the SEA Games battle.

For the record, the national squad are eyeing a bronze medal in the SEA Games.