

LIM CAN'T WAIT FOR 'BIG GAME' DEBUT AT APG

Badminton player among 26 Singaporeans for the June 3-9 Games in Phnom Penh

Su Thet Hnin San

Xavier Lim started playing badminton at the age of six, and began training as an athlete at 17.

Now 21, he is looking forward to his Asean Para Games (APG) debut in June as part of a 26-strong Singapore contingent.

"I'm quite excited because it's a big honour. It's not only my first Asean Para Games but also my first major games, so I can't wait to be able to represent my country playing the sport that I love," said the 1.33m Lim, who is physically impaired.

Aside from being able to represent his country, he is eager to meet fellow national athletes as well as those from other South-

east Asian nations.

"I am excited to play in a competition that is more high pressure, to see if I can handle that kind of pressure, and if I can perform well under such conditions," he said.

He recalls fellow badminton player Ang Chee Hiong, whom he has met in various tournaments, telling him that the experience of competing in major competitions was different from the tournaments he was used to taking part in.

Ang will also be part of the APG contingent.

"It's a big game and there will be a lot of other sports, so I think it'll be a lot livelier, a lot more exciting than my usual tournaments," said Lim, a Year 3 pharmacy student at the National University of Singa-

pore. "But I think it will definitely also be a lot more stressful."

The APG is from June 3-9 in Phnom Penh and the Cambodian capital will also be hosting the May 5-17 SEA Games.

The APG will feature 13 sports, with e-sports as a demonstration event.

Singapore will be represented in athletics, badminton, boccia, powerlifting, swimming and table tennis.

Other Singapore participants include Paralympians Muhammad Diroy Noordin, Toh Wei Soong, Sophie Soon, Nur Aini Mohamad Yasli and Toh Sze Ning.

Five-time Paralympic gold medalist Yip Pin Xiu has opted out as she will be travelling in the first half of 2023 to various overseas competitions.

Two others will be making their APG debut: swimmer Jareth Wong and table tennis player Rodrick Li.

In the 2022 APG in Indonesia,



Xavier Lim and Poland's Daria Bujnicka at the Indonesia Para Badminton International in 2022. PHOTO: DJARUM BADMINTON

Singapore racked up seven golds, nine silvers and 12 bronzes.

Erynne Lim, a Singapore National Paralympic Council board member, will lead the contingent as chef de mission.

She said: "It is a great honour to lead our athletes at the Asean Para Games.

"I would like to congratulate the athletes on their selection and am confident that they will fly the Singapore flag high.

"I wish them all the best as they enter the final stage of preparations for the Games."

NATIONAL PRIDE

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XAVIER LIM, badminton player, on representing Singapore.

Boccia player Toh Sze Ning, who won the gold medal in the mixed pair BC3 and silver in the individual female BC3 categories at the 2022 APG, will be the flagbearer.

"This will be my fifth time representing Singapore at the Asean Para Games and I am very happy and honoured to be selected as the flagbearer," said Toh.

"I will continue to do my best and hope to bring glory to Singapore again and make Singaporeans proud."

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