Training base switch

SEA Games-bound women footballers to get familiarised with competition venues

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KOTA KINABALU: The 2017 SEA Games-bound national women’s football team will switch training base from University of Malaya Sabah (UMS), to Jeonsa in Kg Pandan Sports Complex, in Kuala Lumpur from July 2.

Head coach Mohd Asyraaf Fong Abdullah said the move is necessary in order for his squad to familiarise themselves with the Games venues, which are the UTM Stadium and UM Stadium.

"It would have been great to remain here because we have everything here from facilities and so on. We also have good contacts to play against local clubs here. "However, we need to get the squad or the players familiarised with Games venues so that when the time comes, they will get the team or the players against local clubs here.

"We will play one game each at the Games venues," said Asyraaf.

In a related development, Asyraaf said he has called up two players to attend the ongoing third phase of centralised training, which is ongoing at the UMS Sports Complex.

"I have decided to call on Penang-born teenager Nur Shahirah Suhaimi from Malaysia Sports School Sabah to join the squad. She is only 16 years old and can play in midfield as well as in defense. 

"I also recalled Ranau-born Marcelle Angela Parais from the squad before being axed after the second phase of centralised training.

"Asyraaf ... is hoping for the best from his young squad.

Women’s football is among the 37 sports to be competed in the 29th edition of the Games that will be participated by 11 member countries of the Southeast Asian Games Federation that include Malaysia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

For the record, the Games will officially begin on August 19 and end on August 30.

However, women’s football will be among the few sports that will kick off early from August 14.