

SEA GAMES FLAG PRESENTATION



ONWARDS TO VIENTIANE: Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean (second from left) and Sports Minister Vivian Balakrishnan (third from left) watch as SEA Games chef de mission Jessie Phua passes the Singapore flag to shooter Ong Jun Hong. (PHOTO: NEO XIACRINI)

Games success not about golds

SEA Games chef de mission says developing S'pore athletes more vital

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NOT only will Singapore be sending its smallest contingent since 1979 for December's South-east Asia Games in Laos, but it will also be sending one of its youngest.

Coupled that with the fact that Laos is hosting the biennial sports event for the first time, and also with chef de mission Jessie Phua's refusal to set a gold-medal target for the Dec 9-18 Games.

During yesterday's flag presentation ceremony at Nanyang Polytechnic, the Singapore Bowling Federation president said: "I'm not going to go for a gold-orientated kind of goal, as we have a very young team. Success at the SEA Games, to me, is to be able to develop the spirit of a better Team Singapore."

"I want Singapore athletes to have the heart and spirit of a lion in the competitive arena. But, outside the arena, they must have the graciousness to be the best ambassadors for Singapore, and be appreciative of the host country's efforts to put out its first SEA Games."

➤ This will be the first time Laos is hosting the SEA Games, even though it is one of the seven countries that took part in the first South-east Asian Peninsular Games in 1959.

➤ There are 195 Singapore athletes heading for Vientiane

The Republic is sending 195 athletes to the Laos capital for the Games - its smallest contingent since the 1979 Jakarta Games, where it sent 225 sportsmen.

While the Laos organisers have been able to erect enough sports facilities in time to host the Games, Mrs Phua admitted that the facilities are "basic", and "athletes will find that they don't even have a quarter of their comforts of home".

Nevertheless, she believes it is the best time for the young sportsmen to learn about staying focused on achieving their

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➤ Singapore will send its first boxers to the Games since 1995. It will also send its first four wrestling athletes to the Laos Games.

athletic targets, and this is what she will be drilling into the athletes at the SEA Games.

During yesterday's ceremony, she received the Singapore flag from Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, who is also president of the Singapore National Olympic Council.

Said DPM Teo: "For the athletes going to Laos, I urge you to aim high. Your results may decide your entry to the Asian and Commonwealth Games next year. Make use of the competition to do your best."

The flag was then passed to shooter Ong Jun Hong, the des-

ignated flag bearer of the Singapore contingent for the Games.

"This is the proudest moment of my life," said the National University of Singapore undergraduate. "Only a podium place at the Olympics can ever top this."

Swimmer Quah Ting Wen, on the other hand, was appointed as Team Singapore's pledge-taker.

The Team Singapore website also launched a campaign urging Singaporeans to send their well-wishes via SMS, their website or video clips during its roadshows from Friday until Dec 5.

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HELPPDESK 我的字典

➤ **Contingent:** 队伍 *duì wú*

➤ **Graciousness:** 高雅的 *gāo yǎ de*

➤ **Erect:** 设置 *shè zhì*

➤ **Well-wishes:** 祝贺词 *zhù hè cí*