

# Back for bigger bite



**Bronze effort:** Mohd Firdaus Mohamad Zemi (left) and comrade S. Tharshan in action during the 4x400m relay final at the 2023 Cambodia SEA Games.

## Tharshan recovers from injury and wants to taste success again at SEA Games

By T. AVINESHWARAN

**PETALING JAYA:** National 400m runner S. Tharshan was away from the track for a year before returning to training early this year.

And now that he is back, the 23-year-old Tharshan is hoping for a fresh start under middle-distance coach Amir Izwan Tan Abdullah.

He is one of the select few chosen to form a solid 4x400m squad for the country.

Tharshan burst onto the athletics scene in 2023 when he competed for Malaysia in the Cambodia SEA Games, but sunk into oblivion last year due to a hairline fracture in his right foot.

The long gap however, has not diminished the fire in Tharshan.

"I fractured my right foot and had to focus on rehabilitation and recovery but I'm glad to return to competitive action after a year," said Tharshan, who is pursuing a degree in Mass Communication at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

"The aim is to qualify for the SEA Games this year (in Thailand from Dec 9-20)."

His personal best time is 48.34 seconds, which he had posted at the Sarca-BJSS Championships in 2022.

Initially, Tharshan admitted that he struggled in the relay event.

"I've been involved in athletics since I was 16. In team sports, we have to rely on teammates, which was tough for me because I had always preferred doing things solo as an athlete," said Tharshan.

"I chose athletics because it's me versus me and it was tough but I've learned along the way and know that all the difficulties are worth it when we win.

Tharshan knows as he was part of the men's 4x400m team alongside Firdaus Zemi, Ruslem Zikry Putra Roseli, and Umar Osman at the Cambodia SEA Games when Malaysia clinched their first medal in the event since Myanmar 2013 after finishing third in the final.

Tharshan said he had always feared in disappointing his teammates.

"I felt it during the Cambodia SEA Games as I didn't want the team to lose because of me. I was quite nervous as the environment was different," he said.

"It was a battle of mind but I'm glad, we supported one another to bring home a medal from the Games.

"It was the best feeling and I hope to taste success again in Thailand."