

# Amira's recurring injury may prove to be her Achilles' heel

By AFTAR SINGH

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Triple jumper Noor Amira Nafiah, still recuperating from injuries to both her heels, has given up hopes of qualifying for the Myanmar SEA Games in December.

The 24-year-old Perak-born Amira aggravated the injuries in the World University Games in Kazan in July.

In Kazan, she soared to a season best of 13.43m to finish seventh.

But her effort was way off the SEA Games qualifying mark of 13.73m, the silver medal winning mark at the 2011 Games.

Amira, who holds the national record of 13.90m set in Kuala Lumpur last year, said that she has been undergoing rehabilitation since July.

"I don't think I'll be able to surpass the SEA Games qualifying mark," said Amira, who is pursuing a degree in nutrition at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Amira pointed out that no woman triple jumper from the South-East Asian region has beaten the qualifying mark of 13.73m thus far.

"The number one ranked in the region is Vu Thi Men of Vietnam and she only managed 13.55m.

"If I fail to beat the qualifying mark in the Malaysian Open (schedule for Oct 19-20 at

Universiti Malaya), I hope MAF (Malaysian Athletic Federation) will send me to Myanmar as I'm ranked third in the region based on my season best this year," said Amira, who finished fifth in her debut at the 2009 Laos Games.

She failed to qualify for the 2011 Palembang Games.

The Malaysian Open will be the last chance for athletes to qualify for the biennial Games.

If Amira fails to make it, she can forget about going to Myanmar because MAF president Datuk Zainal Abidin Ahmad had raised the bar by deciding to send athletes under Category A (those who qualify on merit) only.

To date, 12 athletes – one woman and 11 men – have qualified on merit. They are Casier Renee Lee (woman hammer); Rayzam Shah Wan Sofian (110m hurdles); S. Kannathanan (400m); Arif Zulhilmi Alet (400m); Loo Choon Sieng, Khairil Harith Harun (20km walk); Iskandar Alwi (pole vault); Lee Hup Wei, Nauraj Singh, S. Navinraj, A. Kavee Alagan and Azly Ghazali (high jump).

Out of the five high jumpers, only two will be selected for the SEA Games based on their performance in the Malaysian Open.

Some athletes will compete in the Selangor Open this weekend in a bid to qualify.



**Not looking good:** Noor Amira Nafiah is recuperating from injuries to both her heels.