

Amira eager to land her first SEA Games medal in Myanmar

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Despite nursing injuries to both her heels, Noor Amira Nafiah is still determined to win her first SEA Games medal next month.

The Perak-born triple jumper, who is majoring in nutrition at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), injured her heels at the Malaysian Open in October last year.

She then aggravated her injuries at the World University Games in Kazan, Russia, in July this year.

Amira made her SEA Games debut in Laos in 2009 where she finished fifth.

She did not feature in the 2011 Palembang Games, but for the Myanmar Games she will compete in three events – long jump, triple jump and 4x100m.

The 24-year-old Amira, who holds the national triple jump record of 13.90m set at last year's Malaysian Open, said that not even her injuries would stop her from winning a medal in the biennial Games.

"It will be my second Games and I don't want to return empty-handed from Myanmar," said Amira, who won the gold in the triple jump by

clearing 13.32m in the Macau Open in May.

"I don't feel any pain when I run but there is pain when I land ... off a jump.

"But I hope to overcome the pain by making a good jump to win my first medal in the Games," said Amira, who is ranked fourth in the region based on her season's best of 13.43m, which she achieved at the World University Games.

The favourite for the event is Indonesia's Maria Natalia Londa, who has the season's best of 14.11m which she managed in Jakarta in September.

Two Vietnamese athletes – Tran Hue Hoa (13.95m) and Vu Thi Mon (13.55m) – are ranked second and third respectively in the region.

Amira, trained by Uzbekistan coach Victor Sotnikov, is also ranked fourth in the long jump with her 6.07m effort.

Maria Natalia is also top-ranked in the long jump with a distance of 6.42m followed by Catherina Kay Santos (6.17m) of the Philippines and Malaysian teenager Nor Shahidatun Nadia Mohd Zuki (6.09m).

Besides Amira, the other 4x100m women relay runners are S. Komalam Shally, and the Zulkifli twins – Zaidatul Husna and Zaidatul Husniah.



Painful landing: Noor Amira Nafiah competing in the triple jump event at the Malaysian Open this year. She feels pain in her heels whenever she lands after a jump. – Bernama