

Time to look ahead as the tributes pour in

IPOH: Former badminton great Datuk Tan Yee Khan has two words for the current shuttlers – no regrets.

"You all played very well and so, there shouldn't be any regrets.

"In fact, this is one of the best years in our country's Olympic history," said the 75-year-old former All England men's doubles champion.

According to him, Datuk Lee Chong Wei had been under immense pressure to bring home the country's first gold medal.

"It's hard to play your best game under such pressure," he said.

Tan also sang the praises of Malaysia's mixed doubles team of Chan Peng Soon and Goh Liu Ying and the men's doubles pair of Goh V Shem and Tan Wee Kiong, who each brought home a silver from the Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

"The last few matches played by the mixed doubles team were the

best I've seen them perform whereas the men's doubles team has improved tremendously.

"They all deserve praise," he said.

Tan said that rather than focus on the past, the shuttlers must now look to the future.

"They have to study their own matches at the Olympics and see where they went wrong. Learn from those mistakes," he added.

MCA deputy president Datuk Seri Wee Ka Siong said on his Facebook page that Malaysians were proud of the national hero's performance.

"Although tonight is not Chong Wei's, his fighting and never lose spirit is enough to make all Malaysians proud," he said.

In an earlier tweet, Dr Wee asked which individual in the world could match Chong Wei's achievement in securing three silver medals in three consecutive Olympic Games.

Perak MCA chairman Datuk Dr Mah Hang Soon said: "It is very heartening to see them fight so hard."

He added that it was equally heartening to see the unity shown in supporting the athletes.

Bloomberg TV Malaysia chairman and former minister Tan Sri Mohd Effendi Norwawi said Chong Wei had to be admired for his composure and style despite the unimaginable pressure of carrying all of Malaysia's hopes.

"We should be proud of this four-time Olympian, three-time silver medallist! That's a feat that won't be easy to match for years."

His wife, noted actress and producer Puan Sri Tiara Jacquelina, congratulated the Olympic medallist on her Instagram.

She posted: "Well done to our Malaysian Heroes who fought the

world's best and made us proud at #rio2016. What a lovely #merdeka gift for Malaysia!"

Reposting a photo collage of the Rio Olympics medallists by Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, comedian and television host Harith Iskander wrote: "When you understand the hours, commitment, dedication, pain, slog, grit and work our Olympians put in then only will you understand that they are true heroes – and how they unite the people and the country is a power no one can manufacture."

Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azmin Ali said Chong Wei would remain the hero the country can take pride in.

DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang said Chong Wei and Chen Long played great badminton in the final.

"Congrats for Malaysia's three silvers," he posted.

Malaysians all proud of our Olympians' performance

KOTA KINABALU: Malaysians in Sabah and Sarawak are just as pleased with the performance of the Olympians.

Sabah Badminton Association supreme council member Golubi Guntarek said winning and losing was part of a game.

"We Malaysians accept the silvers and bronze and are truly happy," he said.

He said all the Malaysian Olympians had done their best and there was nothing more they could have done.

In Sibul, Sarawak Central Region Hotels Association chairman Johnny Wong felt the athletes had tried their best but "luck was not with them".

"People should give them their full support so that they can do better next time," he said.

Malaysia Amateur Volleyball Association president Dr Hii Sui Cheng said he felt proud to be a Malaysian.

"I was especially happy to see all Malaysians of different backgrounds unite and cheer for the Olympians," said Dr Hii, a leasing company chief executive officer.

"As a sports leader, I will do my part to help the young people go for excellence."

Athletes come home to a hero's welcome

PETALING JAYA: The athletes who made the Jalur Gemilang flutter at the Rio Olympics will come home to a hero's welcome on Wednesday.

The plane flying the Malaysian shuttlers and divers will be given a water salute upon landing at the KL International Airport at 1.50pm.

The athletes will then be welcomed by Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, senior officials from the ministry, National Sports Council and the National Sports Institute.

Further details of the welcome reception will be released today.

Best Olympics ever



Fantastic showing: Divers Cheong (right) and Pandelesa during the synchronised 10m platform event at the Maria Lenk Aquatics Centre. — Bernama

Thumbs up to the Malaysian contingent

PETALING JAYA: Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin has praised Malaysia's Olympics contingent for its best ever performance at the Rio Games.

"As the Rio Olympics draws to a close, the Malaysian contingent goes home with five medals: four silver and one bronze.

"This is the best achievement by the Malaysian contingent in the history of our participation in the Olympic Games," he said on his Facebook page yesterday.

Khairy said that although the *Negaraku* was not played at the Games, he was still proud of the athletes' accomplishments.

"They have united the people and gave hope to all" he said.

Khairy knows Datuk Lee Chong Wei was saddened by the badminton final result, having to shoulder the burden of the nation's hopes for more than 10 years.

"To Chong Wei, you are still the pride of the nation. You are still our hero, the people of Malaysia. Thank you for your struggles all these years. You have the respect of every Malaysian," he said.

Khairy also expressed his gratitude to the athletes who won medals: badminton men's doubles pair Goh V Shem and Tan Wee

Kiong, mixed doubles pair Goh Liu Ying and Chan Peng Soon, divers Pandelesa Rinong and Cheong Jun Hoong and cyclist Azizulhasni Awang.

"Thank you for being the nation's pride, by standing on the world stage as champions. You're all the best and you have inspired generations of Malaysian athletes to come," he said.

He praised all the athletes, coaches and officials for making it Malaysia's best ever Olympic Games.

He added that years from now, he would look back at the Rio Olympics with tears in his eyes and pride in his soul "because you all made me believe that we can achieve greatness and a united nation".

"To chef de mission Tan Sri Al-Amin Majid, thank you for your leadership," he said, while also praising former youth and sports minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek for starting the Road to Rio programme after the London Olympics in 2012.

Khairy added that the focus now must be the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

"The 2020 Olympic planning has started with the launch of the Podium Programme in February. I will emphasise the development of

athletes and sports science application through the Podium Programme and the Programme Kita Juara," he said.

Khairy stressed that with good planning, Malaysia's wait for a gold medal will end at Tokyo 2020.

Ahmad Shabery said the Road to Rio was a continuation of the Road to London programme.

He said the Road to Rio was specific to the types of sports in which Malaysia had a realistic chance of winning, such as badminton, diving, track cycling and archery.

"I only inherited the traditions built by my predecessors, not only from the ministry but also other institutions such as the National Sports Council, Olympic Council and the National Sports Institute.

"Other organisations such as the Badminton Association Malaysia also played a part," said Ahmad Shabery, who is now Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister.

"As a country that is limited in resources, the Road to Rio has proven to be cost effective. It has reduced wastage and focuses only on group of athletes in certain fields.

"In the future, these sports should be maintained while at the same time, we should also start looking for talent in other fields," he added.

Malaysians applaud the national athletes for their success at Rio 2016. Here are some comments on The Star Online's Facebook page:

Paul Ariff Maggs: "When you bring 30mil Malaysians together, that's worth more than any gold medal."

KC Lee: "Though no gold, these Olympic events have helped us Malaysians to take a better look at our own identity again. I can only say to our athletes there: You guys are Malaysian heroes!"

Syed-Kasyfullah Syed-Dawilain: "Thank you for inspiring millions of younger Malaysians. Thank you for making millions of Malaysians proud. Thank you for showing us great determination, outstanding world class performance, and never give up. That is gold."

Hazizan Khairuddin: "It is befitting that our Independence Day shall be celebrated soon. It is time once again for us to be proud to be Malaysian."

Rattan Roy: "It's an outstanding moment where all Malaysians get together to cheer for our national team. Religion & politics were not in the way."

Yin Kx: "After 4 years there are more joys and celebrations compared to 2012! Let us put away all the political and religious issues, stay united and cheer for our great athletes! Please don't make silly statements while we are enjoying the pride of being a Malaysian!"

Lua Wei San: "You did us proud! We have among the best in the world!!! from a small 30 million population only."

Sivalinga Madhava: "Hero is called hero because they rise from falling but you have not fallen from your achievements."

Ishan Patel: "To all our Olympians at Rio, u guys are awesome! Thanks for making the world know that we exist. Proud to see that our Jalur Gemilang officially wave 5 times in this Olympics."

Rcm Chua: "We should cry tears of happiness and spur them on to better things to come. You are our heroes and please believe in yourself as we believe in you."

Rosiah Razlan: "With or without medals, regardless gold, silver or bronze we Msians are really proud of you."

Lieu Jinky: "You have done ur best! U unite all Malaysian spirit through sports..U are one of the biggest achievements of Malaysia's sports .. thank u for the efforts & sacrifices."

Ee Wah Chong: "You have given your best and that's what matters for true sportsmanship. In sporting events, u either win, lose or draw but to do it gracefully and sportingly is what the game is all about."

Karu Aru: "Malaysian Hero..... Bravo because you guys made me feel a Proud Malaysian!"

Nicholas Koh: "The colour of the medal doesn't matter, you hv made us proud as we of all colours of skin stood united as Malaysians to support you all the way"