

SPORTCHECK

IT'S NOT DAMAGING

Dropping of Shally will not affect chances of winning gold

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SPORTS Minister Khairy Jamaluddin believes the chances of the national women's 4x100m relay team doing well at the Kuala Lumpur Sea Games will not be affected by the absence of S. Komalam Shally who has been dropped due to disciplinary problems.

Khairy said the axing of Komalam was done through the correct channels and due to legitimate reasons as stated by the Malaysian Athletics Federation (MAF), National Sports Council (NSC) and Olympic Council of Malaysia (OCM).

"This decision was made by the athletics team management itself who then informed NSC and OCM," said Khairy.

"As minister, the first question I asked of the management was whether this would affect our chances in the 4x100m and the answer I received made sense.

"We have suitable replacements for Komalam so our chances are not affected."

Komalam was dropped because she was deemed to have disrupted the harmony within the squad. She, together with Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli, Siti Fatimah Mohamad and Shereen Samson Vallabouy, had broken the national record in the event at the Thailand Open in



S. Komalam Shally

June.

Meanwhile, badminton player Goh Soon Huat and a futsal player, who is yet to be identified, were alleged to have broken Sea Games curfew at the Renaissance Hotel in Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

Chef-de-mission Datuk Marina Chin is awaiting full reports from the national sports associations of the two athletes involved.

"I cannot comment as I have yet to receive the reports and have not met with OCM secretary Datuk Low Beng Choo as I have been busy with a number of programmes," said Marina when met at the open swimming, triathlon and waterski venue for

the Sea Games in Putrajaya yesterday.

"I have heard about it (incident) but it is not fair for me to talk about it yet."

Marina warned the athletes to adhere to the rules to avoid disciplinary action which could even lead to them being expelled from the Sea Games contingent.

"Usually, we will let off first time offenders with a stern warning. However, disciplinary action will be taken if they repeatedly break the rules.

"The NSAs will propose to the contingent management any disciplinary action to be taken against the athletes, should it be necessary."

National athletes have started to check into the Renaissance Hotel since Friday. The Malaysian contingent have more than 700 athletes.

Malaysian athletes staying at the hotel are required to be in their rooms by 11.30pm at the latest.

Soon Huat, when asked about the incident, said yesterday: "I was only at the (hotel) lobby."

The shuttler said he had just returned from the national athletes' camp at 10pm or 11pm on the night of the incident with roommate Iskandar Zulkarnain Zainuddin.

"I saw that Iskandar was tired and already wanted to sleep so I decided to talk on the phone outside the room. I had bumped into (National badminton team manager) Mat Rashid Jahlil and told him that I just wanted to talk to my friend (on the phone) for a while before I slept."

