

ATHLETICS

NO WAY BACK

Marina says
Komalam is out of
the Sea Games

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THERE is no way back to the national track and field Sea Games squad for sprinter S. Komalam Shally.

With less than two weeks to go before the start of the athletics programme on Aug 22, the women's sprint team's preparation has been thrown into disarray.

Neither team manager Datuk Salim Parlan nor national chief coach Zainal Abas wanted to elaborate further on the issue with no decision reached on who will fill the women's 200m spot made vacant by the decision to expel Komalam, 29.

Malaysian Sea Games chef-de-mission Datuk Marina Chin supported the move made by the athletics management to drop Komalam over unspecified disciplinary issues.

"She was given her rights and the decision has been reached," said Marina after meeting the track and field athletes in Bukit Jalil yesterday.

"She had been given many chances and finally that decision has been taken.

"As CDM and a former (Bukit Jalil Sports School) principal, I always believe in discipline. Without it you cannot go anywhere. If we don't take action what message are we sending to the rest? So I have no intention (of reversing the decision)."

Marina is confident the issue

will not detract the national athletes from focusing on the Sea Games, where the Malaysian Athletics Federation have targeted six gold medals.

"It's a settled matter. If people don't harp on it then it would not be a big issue.

"At this moment, the athletes have accepted it and life goes on.

"We cannot tolerate indiscipline. I appeal for everyone not to interfere with the preparation of the athletes.

This is a very crucial time. Let them focus on task at hand," said Marina, a former sprinter.

The national coaches are now considering what to do to fill the void in the women's 200m and 4x100m relay.

One option is to have Siti Fatima Mohammed double up for the 100m and 200m, as Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli is set to do, while another is to select a different athlete to fill the 200m slot.

Among those available are national schools sprint champion Azreen Nabila Alias and new call-up Norris Foo.

Norris is being looked at to join Husniah, Siti Fatima and Azreen in the relay team with the coaches also looking at alternatives including 400m runners Nurul Faizah Asma Mazlan and Fathin Nurfaqihah Yusuf.

However, matters are complicated by Faizah already being entered in the 400m, 400m hurdles and 4x400m events while Fathin is committed to two events.

Shereen Samson Vallabouy, who was part of the quartet which set a new 4x100m national record at the Thailand Open in June, is out of the running as she is recovering from injury and will only compete in the 4x400m event.



One of these athletes (from left) Norris Foo, Fathin Faqihah Mohd Yusuf, Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli and Azreen Nabila Alias could get a call-up to the 4x100 squad.