

Johnathan gunning for year-end joy to cap a fine 2017



By RAJES PAUL

PETALING JAYA: National shooter Johnathan Wong Guanjie (*pic*) is looking forward to some end-of-the-year cheer to wrap up his successful journey in 2017.

The 25-year-old, who is No. 32 in the Asian ranking list, wants to keep the momentum going with a good showing at the 10th Asian Airgun Championships in Wako City, Japan, from Dec 6-12.

"This'll be my last assignment, so I want to end it well," said the aerospace engineering student from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

"This meet will give me an idea as to where I stand among the best in Asia.

"It will also put me in the right mindset going into 2018. My main goal is to do well at the Commonwealth Games (in Australia in April) and Asian Games (in Indonesia in August). "I reached the 10m air pistol final at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. This time, I want to go for a medal.

"There is also the World Championships next year. It'll serve as the qualifiers for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games," said the Olympian.

This year, Johnathan has proven to be one of the most outstanding shooters in the national team.

He finished as Malaysia's best shooter at the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games in August by winning one gold in the 10m air pistol and one silver in 50m pistol.

En route to winning the gold, he stunned Rio Olympic Games gold medallists Hoang Xuan Vinh of Vietnam.

That feat saw him being the only shooter drafted into the Podium Programme recently.

"I'm delighted to be in the Podium Programme for the first time. I'll surely benefit from the tailor-made scientific training programmes. It'll give me the extra edge to prepare for a hectic schedule next year," said Johnathan, who added that he would discuss with head coach Park Sang-soon of South Korea about managing his time between training and studies.

"My priority is shooting next year. My studies may take a back-seat. I'll most probably take low credits at the university. I'll discuss with my coach about my training and competition plans.

"This has been a good year so far. I'm looking forward to another great year."