

sports

SEA Games boost for athletics with 1st technical director in 7 years



German coach Volker Herrmann, who will join Singapore Athletics as its new technical director, conducting a clinic with local athletes and coaches in October last year. Photo courtesy of Singapore Athletics

LESS

Bavarian state sprint team head coach Herrmann to join association at the end of March

View all 0 comments

Like Share 393 Tweet

BY LOW LIN FHOONG

linhoong@mediacorp.com.sg

PUBLISHED: 9:40 PM, MARCH 21, 2017

SINGAPORE — Singapore Athletics (SA) has given its track and field athletes a boost ahead of the SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur in August by recruiting a new technical director. Volker Herrmann, a German, is expected to start work with the national sports association at the end of the month.

Recommended For You

The Big Read: For at-risk and underprivileged youth, sports has a special kind of magic

Thousands march in Paris after Chinese man's death by police

How to succeed (and fail) at a job interview in Japan

Ady An marries multimillionaire boyfriend- Toggle (Toggle)

Let junior do sports — he'll really benefit! - SmartParents.sg (SmartParents)

This is the first time in seven years that SA will be filling the post, with former distance runner C Veeramani the last to hold the position in 2010.

SA vice-president (training and selection) Govindasamy Balasekaran told TODAY that Herrmann's appointment is part of the association's long-term plans for the future.

"This is definitely a boost (for the Games), but the SEA Games is a short-term goal," said Balasekaran.

"We are looking at the long term, all the way to 2020, and we need to build the foundation (for the sport)."

The head coach of the Bavarian state sprint team, Herrmann is also an accredited International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) lecturer for sprints and jumps.

The 32-year-old, who will be on a two-year contract with SA, had previously worked with sprinter Shanti Pereira and high jumper Michelle Sng last October when he was here to conduct courses and workshops for athletes and coaches.

Herrmann's new role will see him working with national athletes and their coaches on their high performance plans. He will also mentor coaches to help raise standards here.

At the 2015 SEA Games, the Republic's athletes won nine medals (three gold, three silver, three bronze) in track and field, with Pereira, thrower Zhang Guirong and runner Soh Rui Yong winning top honours in the women's 200m, women's shot put, and men's marathon respectively.

The trio are among the 10-strong squad who have qualified for the Games to date, and Balasekaran is confident that they will be able to hit the projected number of 21 qualified athletes when the qualifying window closes on May 31.

SA is planning to hold a centralised training camp in either July or August for the SEA Games squad, with an overseas stint also a possible option for the athletes. It is also hopeful of getting the men's 4x100m and women's 4x100m relay teams to qualify for the Games.

Meanwhile, veteran sprinter Calvin Kang, a three-time SEA Games silver medallist in the men's 4x100m relay, is aiming to earn a spot in the relay and men's 100m events.

Kang will be competing in next month's 79th Singapore Open Track and Field Championships (April 27-28), but the sprinter will need to better the 2015 SEA Games 100m bronze medal mark of 10.45sec. "My goal is to train up well for the Singapore Open, seize the chance to run on a good track with good competitors and good conditions," he said yesterday.

While Team Singapore's relay quartet had come agonisingly close to a gold on four occasions, Kang said it will be even tougher this time.

"In terms of medal chances, realistically this year is pretty hard as Malaysia has the fastest individual times, the Thais and Indonesians are always fast and clocking low 39s," said the 26-year-old, who has a personal best of 10.47sec. "I reckon it will be a miracle for us to go sub-40s."

While he was happy to hear of Herrmann's appointment, Kang – who had to switch to current coach Han Zhong Jian after former national coach Luis Cunha's contract was not renewed – felt that more needs to be done.

He added: "Whatever decision they make, hopefully it will encourage the younger generation to have proper plans to train toward the Games. And, hopefully the appointment of the technical director will help these plans and not (function) on a one, two-year cycle."



View all 0 comments



Like



Share



393



Tweet