

ASIAN GAMES: KIRANDEEP VOWS TO REPAY COACH'S TRUST

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 13 (Bernama) - The youngest player in the country's women's hockey squad to the Asian Games, Kirandeep Kaur wants to repay coach Muhammad Dharma Raj Abdullah's confidence in her by showing a performance to be proud of at the Games.

The 15-year-old will be the youngest female hockey player to play on the Asian Games stage when the hockey event opens on Friday at the Gelora Bung Karno Sports Complex, Hockey Field in Jakarta.

"I am very proud to be selected to the national squad, but I have to prove that there is a meaning (to be chosen). I want to give my best and play hard, despite feeling a little stressed.

"My teammates have taught me about the rhythm of the game and the team's approach (to the game) ... I also feel comfortable and compatible with them," said the student of SMK Bukit Bandaraya, Bangsar.

Last week, the coach created a shock naming Kirandeep in the 18-player list to the Asian Games after seeing her performances at the World Series in Singapore in late June and the Brisbane, Australia tour late last month.

In carrying out the responsibility of representing the country at the Games, the form three student has to postpone sitting for the Form Three Assessment trial which will be held this month.

"Despite spending a lot of time on the field, I have to balance study and hockey so I can focus on both. Usually, in the morning I go to school, in the evening I attend training, but occasionally I have to skip tuition classes," she said.

The Malaysian Tigress squad, voted in Group A, will open its campaign against Hong Kong this Friday, before meeting China (Aug 23), Chinese Taipei (Aug 25) and Japan (Aug 27), while their semi-finals and final actions are scheduled on Aug 29 and Aug 31.

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