

Yip inspires squad members before Dubai Games

Lester Wong

Singapore's Asian Youth Para Games (AYPG) contingent departed for Dubai yesterday, looking to build further on what has been a positive year for para sports.

With 28 athletes, the squad are the largest that the Republic has sent to the quadrennial event, which begins on Sunday and ends on Dec 13. Only nine competitors went to Kuala Lumpur for the last edition in 2013.

This meet will feature seven sports – athletics, badminton, boccia, bowling, goalball, powerlifting and table tennis.

Singapore won three silver medals (two from athletics and one from swimming) at the previous AYPG in Malaysia.

Three-time Paralympic gold medallist Yip Pin Xiu is serving as Singapore's chef de mission, which marks the first time an active para-athlete has been appointed to the role.

Speaking at the send-off ceremony at Changi Airport's Terminal 3, the 25-year-old Yip reminded her fellow para-athletes about the importance of hard work and the need to persevere through adversity.

"It definitely gets tiring, but the human spirit is very strong and you have to push on to give your very best. Commitment and passion are very important, and they're some-



thing you have to keep in mind to go far," said Yip, who participated in the inaugural Tokyo AYPG in 2009 as a 17-year-old.

"This (sporting) journey has shaped me in so many important ways... I am so much more confident, motivated and determined as an athlete and this is where sports will take you."

Singapore bagged 10 gold, 18 sil-

ver and 24 bronze medals at the Kuala Lumpur Asean Para Games (APG) in September.

This was also the country's biggest medal haul from any overseas APG.

The 94-member contingent was also the largest Singapore has sent to an overseas APG.

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Singapore's Asian Youth Para Games contingent at Changi Airport yesterday. Chef de mission Yip Pin Xiu is in the back row, seated. Guest of honour Baey Yam Keng, Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth is standing in the back row, in a full red T-shirt. PHOTO: SINGAPORE NATIONAL PARALYMPIC COUNCIL