

Measures in place to support national athletes

WE SHARE Mr Benjamin Goh's views ("Allow athletes more time to complete studies"; Monday) that our athletes face challenges in having to juggle the demands of high-performance sport and school or work.

The support system that every athlete relies on can make the difference between success and failure, and this is where the Singapore Sports Institute comes in - by offering a holistic support system to help our athletes be at their best, both physically and psychologically.

The institute recently launched the Sports Excellence Education Scheme and Sports Excellence Career Scheme specially for our national athletes to balance their academic or career aspirations without compromising their pursuit of sporting excellence.

Six institutes of higher learning (IHLs), including Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, Republic Polytechnic and the Institute of Technical Education, have come on board the Education Scheme.

Our youth athletes who are pursuing their studies at these IHLs will be able to benefit from the academic flexibility afforded to them when they compete at major games or world

championships. Examples of such academic flexibility include provision for extended duration of study alongside provision of multiple leaves of absence to compete in key competitions, as well as distance learning and e-support for athletes who are training or competing overseas.

We also launched the Sports Excellence Scholarship this year, offering an enhanced level of support to highly talented Singapore athletes with the potential to excel at the highest levels of their sport. This support is all-encompassing and, apart from financial support, our athletes will also receive education and career support through our partnerships with companies and IHLs through the above schemes.

While we provide our athletes with comprehensive support for them to achieve their sporting ambitions, it is also important that they be equipped with skill sets to prepare them for a successful transition into the workforce after their sporting careers.

Ultimately, we are grooming our Team Singapore athletes to be well-rounded individuals and role models for the community.

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