

REFRESHED, READY TO RACE

Pereira earns \$315k at MAP Awards for successful Asian, SEA Games outings

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After a hectic year in the fast lane, Singapore sprint queen Shanti Pereira admitted it was "kind of strange" to slow down and pack for travelling without her spikes to go for a one-week holiday in South Korea to "just eat and shop" in October after her Asian Games exploits.

She said: "It was a nice change to be able to do that and wind down after such a crazy and incredible year."

But the country's fastest woman just cannot stand still. She took a three-week break but has already resumed training for a month as she eyes more national records when she resumes her season in April, before taking on the July 26-Aug 11 Paris Olympics.

Pereira, 27, said: "The goal is always to go faster and find the little places to improve as much as we can and cutting down the time."

Her sterling Asian and SEA Games campaigns in 2023 also made her the big winner at the Major Games Award Programme (MAP) awards presentation and appreciation dinner at Timbre+ One North on Nov 29.

She collected \$315,000 for her Asiad gold (women's 200m) and silver (100m) plus two SEA Games titles.

She noted: "Having this extra prize launches us to a new level in our careers. Any extra support is amazing help for athletes in the lead-up to major competitions."

In total, the Singapore National Olympic Council (SNOC) and Tote Board rewarded 121 medallists from both Games with almost \$2.3 million. Athletes are required to do-



TOP EARNERS

1 SHANTI PEREIRA, athletics
One Asian Games gold (women's 200m), one Asian Games silver (100m), two SEA Games golds (100m and 200m)
Total: \$315,000

2 RYAN LO, sailing
One Asian Games gold (men's ILCA 7) and one SEA Games gold (ILCA 7)
Total: \$210,000

3 MAXIMILIAN MAEDER, sailing
One Asian Games gold (men's Formula Kite)
Total: \$200,000

4 ISAAC GOH, sailing
One Asian Games silver (boys' ILCA 4) and one SEA Games gold (ILCA 4)
Total: \$110,000

5 JOWEN LIM, wushu
One Asian Games silver (men's daoshu and gunshu) and one SEA Games gold (daoshu and gunshu)
Total: \$110,000

Sprinter Shanti Pereira with her medals before the Major Games Award Programme awards presentation and appreciation dinner at Timbre+ One North on Nov 29. ST PHOTO: ARIFFIN JAMAR

nate between 20 and 50 per cent of MAP Awards prize money back to their national sports association for future training and development.

The Republic's 554-strong contingent at the Phnom Penh SEA Games in May returned with 51 golds, 43 silvers and 64 bronzes while the team that competed at the Hangzhou Asiad from Sept 23-

Oct 8 managed three gold, six silver and seven bronze medals.

For wrestler Timothy Loh, who finally won a SEA Games gold with his victory in the men's freestyle 125kg in Cambodia, the \$10,000 reward was much appreciated.

On top of training and competitions, the 31-year-old coaches wrestling, judo and Brazilian jiu-jitsu, while also operating a pop-up

food business. Loh, who is trying to qualify for the Paris Olympics, said: "It's crazy, but it's nice because these are things I love to do - I love to coach, I love to cook, I love to compete and I love to train."

"It is tough, don't get me wrong, but doing something that you actually enjoy makes it easier."

"These are the first MAP Awards for wrestling, and it shows that we

all can have something to achieve as we push and work towards bigger things. Most of the money will go into training camps towards the bigger goal of qualifying for the Olympics."

SNOC acting president Jessie Phua thanked the sports fraternity, families, Government and various stakeholders for their support of the athletes.

She said: "At these Games, we witnessed our athletes' tenacity to stand among the region's best and their determination to earn a spot on the podium."

"We hope these experiences have expanded the desire and hunger to chase loftier dreams and reach greater heights."

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