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## Veteran Razie left out of national team

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### HOCKEY

# Veteran Razie left out of national team

**VETERAN** defender and penalty corner specialist Razie Rahim has been excluded from the national hockey men's training squad.

Razie's name was conspicuously missing when head coach Sarjit Singh announced yesterday a record 46 players for national training which begins on March 19. The team will be trimmed to 30 players by April 1.

The players were selected based on their performances in the recent Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

Sarjit said he talked to Razie on his playing career.

"Razie is a good player but he wants to retire, and he will be announcing his retirement soon."

Razie, 36, played in a record 321 matches and was the country's top penalty corner drag flicker.

"I have called up a few national players who are aged 30 and above. They will be the backbone of the team."

They are goalkeeper Hafizuddin Othman (32), defender Marhan Jalil (34), and the Saari brothers, forward Faizal (33) and midfielder Fitri (31).

Sarjit recalled Tenaga Nasional captain Syed Syafiq Syed Cholan, who retired from the national team two years ago.

The coach said he needs good



Razie Rahim

penalty corner drag flickers and Syed Syafiq, 29, played well in the recent MHL.

Sarjit has also called up defender T. Perabu, who left the national junior team last August due to a personal reason.

Sarjit said his target is the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, where Malaysia need to win the gold to qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

The team's first assignment is the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Ipoh from May 4-11 followed by the Nations Cup in Poland from May 31-June 9.

Sarjit will be assisted by former national captain Azrul Effendy Bistamam, school teacher Sukri Mutalib and goalkeepers coach S. Kumar.

Meanwhile, national team management chairman Datuk Ahmad Najmi Abdul Razak said: "Now you guys (46 players) will fight among yourself to win a place in the national squad."

"But after that you guys have a bigger task that is to fight against the better teams."

"I don't want to hear from the 46 players called up for training that you cannot attend training because you have a personal problem."

"If you don't take the chance then you will never be called for training anymore. We have had enough excuses." **Aftar Singh**

#### THE 46-PLAYER TRAINING SQUAD

**Goalkeepers:** Hafizuddin Othman, Zaimi Mat Deris, Adrian Andy Albert, Rafaizul Sani, Che Shahrul Azmi Che Saufi, Danish Afnan Faizal.

**Defenders:** Fariz Harizan, Syarman Mat Tee, Andywalfian Jeffrynus, Arif Syafie Ishak, Firdaus Omar, Luqman Nul Hakim Ahmad Shukran, Syed Syafiq Syed Cholan, Amirul Hamizan Azahar, Najib Abu Hassan, Marhan Jalil, Kamarulzaman Kamaruddin, T. Perabu.

**Midfielders:** Firti Saari, Abdul Khaliq Hamirin, Mughni Kamal, Nik Aiman Nik Rozemi, Izham Azhar, Alfarico Lance Liao, Nursyahni Zulkifli, Syawal Abdul Razak, Adam Ashraf Johari, Saifuddin Azli, Khairil Hakimi Zainol.

**Forwards:** Faizal Saari, Akhimmullah Anuar Esook, Shello Silverius, Danish Aiman Khairul Anuar, Azrai Aizad Abu Kamal, Norsyafiq Sumantri, Muhajir Abdul Rauf, Shafiq Ikmal Daniel Suzaini, Amirul Haniff Mamat, Azimuddin Syakir Kamaruddin, Naaveennash Panicker Thevendran, Harris Iskandar Osman, Sriraam Vickneswaran, Nur Rahull Hrsikesa Thaitchana Muruthi, Muhibuddin Moharam, Tengku Nasrul Ikmal Tengku Abdul Rahim, Eswaran George.