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HOCKEY

Subahan raises the bar for national team

MALAYSIAN Hockey Confederation (MHC) president Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal has revised his KPI for the national team — from their current World No 14 position to eight in two years time.

Subahan said this at the launching of new attire and sponsorship presentation for the national men's and women's teams.

The men will be playing in the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) in Kuantan on Oct 20-30.

"When I took over more than a year ago, I said I wanted the men's team to become 10th by the time my tenure is over.

"However, after charting their path to qualify for the World Cup (2018) and Olympics (2020), I have revised my KPI to take the team to eighth in the world," said Subahan.

A total of RM900,000 sponsorship has been raised for the ACT, and from the traditional yellow, the men and women will now wear orange jerseys as their first kits.

Their second and third kits remain blue and white respectively.

The sponsorship was RM500,000 from QNET, RM300,000 from Tenaga Nasional, RM50,000 from

Genting Malaysia and RM50,000 from Waz Lian Group of Companies.

Kappa, an Italian sportswear brand, has pledged RM350,000 in sponsorship towards the national men's and women's senior teams for the duration of three years.

"Since the team are known as Tigers, a change from yellow to orange is appropriate," said Subahan.

The ACT will be offering International Hockey Federation (FIH) ranking points for the first time, and to achieve Subahan's KPI, the Tigers need to play in the final of the ACT.

When asked about Malaysia's target in the ACT, Subahan said: "I have my own KPI, and coach Stephen (van Huizen) has his own."

Van Huizen maintained the ACT semi-finals as his first target.

"We are ranked fourth in Asia and going by ranking, we will aim for the semi-finals first," said van Huizen.

The other teams in the ACT are defending champions Pakistan, Asian Games champions India, South Korea, China and Japan.

The format will see the teams playing in a league before the top four advance to the semi-finals. **By Jugjet Singh**



MHC president **Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal** (fourth from left) receives the new jerseys for the national team from **Vovature Sdn Bhd** managing director (KAPPA Malaysia) **Mohd Afiq Tam Abdullah** (fourth from right) at the sponsorship presentation yesterday. Pic by **Owee Ah Chun**