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## Vickneswaran wants to keep Terengganu victors in the MHL

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former international I. Vickneswaran is back as a coach and this time he's in charge of Terengganu for the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) starting on Jan 3.

And Vickneswaran, who last coached KL Hockey Club (KLHC) in the MHL in 2014, is relishing the challenge of keeping the East coast team a silverware-winning outfit.

Terengganu have bagged nine titles in the last five years while under former national coach Sarjit Singh.

They've won the Premier Division four times in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2018, the overall title (TNB Cup) four times in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and the Tan Sri P. Alagendra Cup once in 2017.

Vickneswaran, an ex-international, said his immediate challenge would be to help Terengganu win one of the three titles next year.

"We've lost the services of the world's best penalty corner drag flicker Gonzalo Peillat (of Argentina), who was the top scorer in 2018 with 16 goals.

"However, I'll do my utmost as a coach to guide the East coast team to finish at the top," said Vickneswaran.

He stressed that Terengganu are the last among the seven teams featuring in the league to start training.

"We only started training on Thursday and we've signed six foreign players, but they will only arrive at the end of this month or the first week of January," added Vickneswaran.

Terengganu have retained two foreigners, who played for them last season – Pablo Xavier Travanis of Argentina and Pakistan's Ahmad Shakeel Butt.

South Korean Jang Jong-hyun, who played for KLHC last season, are among Terengganu's new signings.

Daniel Kyriakides of Wales, Ganzalo Merino of Argentina and Korean Jung Man-jae make up the other imports.

Terengganu will also be powered by the Fitri brothers – Fitri and Faizal – who featured in the Hockey World Cup in India with Malaysia.

Vickneswaran said Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) would be the team to beat in the league as they boast six world-class foreign players.

"UniKL also have quality national players and they look to be in good form to win titles," said Vickneswaran, who coached UniKL when they made their debut in the MHL in 2009.

Vickneswaran coached UniKL for one season before he joined Sapura in 2010 until 2012.

UniKL have signed three Dutchmen – Robbert Kemperman, Martijn Havenga and Valentin Verga.

Kemperman and Verga played for Holland in the recent World Cup where they finished runners-up to Belgium.

UniKL have retained goalkeeper David Harte of Ireland and two Australians – midfielder Timothy Deavin and forward Keiren Govers.

Terengganu open their campaign against Nur Insafi in the Tan Sri P. Alagendra Cup on Jan 3.