

Stressed Olympians set for a break

Medallists eyeing rest and family time after the strains of competing

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PETALING JAYA: Their triumphant smiles do little to hide the bags under their eyes.

Since their return from the Rio Olympics, Malaysia's medallists are still nursing the strains of competing and the fanfare that followed the country's best performance at any Olympic Games.

While they are pestered about their game plan for Tokyo 2020 and other international competitions, a break is what is on most of their minds right now.

"Our bodies are quite tired," said synchronised diver Cheong Jun Hoong.

"I think rest is more important. Have a good rest so we can go further and go longer. After that, we can prepare for upcoming competitions in October," she said.

Her 10m platform synchronised diving partner Pandelega Rinong agreed, saying that she now wished to return to her hometown of Kuching to spend some much needed time with her family.

The two-time medallist said she planned to skip a few tournaments for now and refocus on completing her studies in sports science.

Men's doubles badminton silver medallists Tan Wee Kiong and Goh V Shem, however, are only giving themselves until the end of the month to recharge themselves.

After that, it is back to the court in preparation for the Yonex Open in Japan on Sept 20. The pair, who have never won a Badminton World Federation Super Series title, are gunning for Japan's doubles championship.

Datuk Lee Chong Wei, meanwhile, said he did not wish to speculate if he would hang up his racquet

for good or pursue competitive badminton further, saying that he just wished to remain injury-free for now.

The three-time Olympic silver medallist said that Rio would be his last Olympic appearance but that he wanted to continue playing until the 2017 BWF World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland.

"I hope I can be injury-free until the World Championships. If my condition is still good after that, I'll continue. If not, I'll stop," he said.

Chong Wei and the other Olympians were at Menara Lien Hoe to receive a RM315,000 cash prize from XOX Mobile for their strong showing at the Olympic Games.

Chong Wei, who is also XOX Mobile brand ambassador, received RM110,000 while the other silver medallists were awarded RM60,000 each.



Ready for rest: Pandelega, Cheong and Lee at the XOX Mobile event in Petaling Jaya. — Bernama

Watch the video thestartv.com