



Bodybuilding bulking up in Singapore as more take up sport



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(PHOTO: Yahoo Singapore / Safhras Khan)

Once tainted by doping, bodybuilding is gaining a new lease of life thanks to more people, especially millennials, taking up the sport.

Pradip Subramaniam, president of the World Bodybuilding & Physique Fitness Federation (WBPF) Singapore, said that he has seen a steady increase in the number of participants in the sport over the last couple of years.

Speaking to *Yahoo Singapore* during the WBPF Invitational Championships held at the Nexus Auditorium on Sunday (14 May), Pradip said he is confident that the sport will continue to grow here.

He is also working hard to clear the sport's tainted name by complying with guidelines set by the government on doping.

"For too long this issue has cast a shadow over the sport. I am working hard to correct such issues. We are working with the government and we have our guidelines (when organising events).

"We are OK to comply with any government policy when it comes to the sport," he said.

Pradip added that he is constantly in touch with Sport Singapore and wants to work together with the association in order to bring the sport back to its glory days.

The WBPF Invitational Championships, co-organised by the Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation (ABBF), is a good example on how the sport is growing in Singapore, said Pradip.

He said the championship drew 36 participants from 10 different classes, adding that millennials are drawn to the sport due to their interest in fitness.

"In fact there are millennials who are using social media, such as Instagram to highlight their love for the sports. There are even those who have 10,000 followers on their account," he said with a laugh.

Veteran to represent Singapore in Seoul

The veteran also saw a slew of veteran bodybuilders take to the stage to strut their stuff in front of a crowd of about 300 people.

One of them was Shaiful Haq Ahmad Ishak, a 37-year-old fitness instructor who walked away with a gold medal in the 85kg and above category.

Shaiful, who represented the Republic in numerous overseas tournaments blew the judges away with his poses, earning himself a chance to represent the country in the upcoming 51st Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Championship in Seoul this August.

"I am happy and shocked to be chosen to represent Singapore. I am confident that I am able to bring glory and win at the Asian Championship," said Shaiful.

The ABBF's secretary-general Paul Chua praised the rapid growth of the sport in Singapore, adding that it is moving forward.

In his speech at the event, Chua said that he is pleased with the WBPF's efforts in wanting to organise more events in the country.

"However, I urge them to start small by organising local events and promoting local talents before expanding regionally and globally," he said.

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