

*Vietnamese sport has successfully realised the set goal of finishing in the top three nations on the medal standings at the recent 29th Southeast Asian (TTVN) Games in Malaysia.*



Vietnam wins the women`s 4x100m relay gold medal for the first time at the SEA Games arena.

However, alongside the positive results in a number of sporting events, there still remain the failures that need to be seriously addressed by the sport sector, in an effort towards the 2018 Asian Games (Asiad), slated for next August in Indonesia.

The fabulous triumph in Olympic sports at the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games has demonstrated the Vietnamese sport sector`s righteous orientation.

During the past decade, from a participating country with poor medal winning possibility, Vietnam has achieved speedy progress with regards to swimming and athletics, affirming their position on the regional playground.

It is one of the reasons based on which Tran Duc Phan, head of the Vietnam sport contingent at the 2017 SEA Games, has boldly asserted that as the host country of the 31st SEA Games in 2021, Vietnam will possibly propose the organisation of only Asiad and Olympic events, and the elimination of “local pond” sports, aiming towards a “clean” (being fair and unbiased) SEA Games edition.

In order to brighten Vietnam's medal outlook on the largest continental sporting playfield next year, it is urgent for the domestic sport sector to make the necessary preparations right after the conclusion of the 29th SEA Games.

According to Phan, the sport sector is reviewing and reclassifying athletes, seeking to make a new list of 90-100 prominent sportspersons for key investment in service of the 2018 goals.

This is a good signal for the sports on which Vietnam is focusing its energy in the hunt for Asian and world honours.

As shown in specialised statistics, in addition to the parameters closely approaching the Asian level, Vietnam's track and field, swimming, fencing and gymnastics teams are possessing a generation of young and promising talents, such as Le Tu Chinh (track and field), Nguyen Huu Kim Son (swimming) and Le Thanh Tung (gymnastics), among others.

However, not all the athletes named in the list for key investment always live up to expectations.

The investment is not merely an increase in money allowance for athletes but needs to follow the right methods and have the sufficient time and preparations, together with medical advice from nutrition experts.

At the 29th SEA Games, the Vietnam delegation settled for third place in the overall medal table with only one gold medal more than Singapore, but were inferior with regards to the total number of medals won.

Vietnamese athletes were successful in Olympic sports but performed poorly in many other events.

Despite creating a miracle of surpassing the Thai opponents for the first time with a collection of

17 gold medals, the medal outlook for the Vietnam track and field team at a higher-level arena, such as Asiad, is still yet to be clear, as this sport is based on specific competition parameters, instead of the quantity of medals.

Meanwhile, only a few parameters of Vietnamese athletes at the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games have reached the medal winning ability at Asiad.

Similarly for swimming, “little mermaid” Nguyen Thi Anh Vien won eight of Vietnam’s 10 gold medals in the sport; however, her parameters were poorer than in the previous SEA Games edition concerning the number of records broken.

This has indicated that it requires unceasing efforts from the athletes if they want to go further in their sport career.

Besides, at the 29th SEA Games, some other countries in the region, including Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the host nation of the 2018 Asiad, Indonesia, also introduced to the public many young and promising athletes in track and field, weightlifting, swimming, shooting and archery, with parameters closely approaching the continental level.

After all, it is no longer an important matter to settle for third, fourth or fifth position in the “local pond” SEA Games. The SEA Games 2017 is only a stepping stone for the Southeast Asian sport.

Without any urgent efforts and specific plans made, it is possible that Vietnamese sport will be left behind by their regional friends.

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