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Youngster Meor rewarded with a trip to South Africa

KUALA LUMPUR: Youngster Meor Mohamed Azuan Hassan is the surprise inclusion in the 20-man national hockey team for the 10-day playing tour of South Africa next month.

The 19-year-old Meor is a midfielder, who played for Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) in the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

"Meor deserves a place in the team as he was outstanding in the MHL," said national coach Paul Revington. "I want to try him out in our four matches against South Africa."

The national team will leave for South Africa on Sunday and return on June 13.

Revington also named Ahmad Kazamirul Nasruddin, who last played for Malaysia in the World Cup qualifier in New Zealand in 2009, for the tour.

"Kazamirul is a hard working defender and he is also good with his penalty corner flicks," said the South African coach.

Revington, however, has excluded

national No. 1 goalkeeper S. Kumar and seasoned defender Mohd Amin Rahim from the tour.

"Kumar was left out of the squad due to travel fatigue as he recently

went for a one-week goalkeepers training in Holland. His place will be taken over by Khairulnizam (Ibrahim)," said Revington.

"As for Amin, he opted out for personal reasons," he added.

Revington said

The national team are currently playing a four-match series with China's Liaoning club. The Malaysians

won the opening two matches 2-1 and 4-2.

The other matches will be held today (7pm) and tomorrow (6pm) at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

The biggest assignment for the Malaysians this year is the World League semi-finals in Johor Baru from June 29-July 7.

The squad

Goalkeepers: Khairulnizam Ibrahim, Roslan Jamaluddin.

Defenders: Ahmad Kazamirul Nasruddin, Azlan Mison, Baljit Singh Charun, Faiz Helmi Jali, Mohd Sukri Abdul Mutalib, Mohd Izad Hakimi Jamaluddin, Mohd Razie Abdul Rahim.

Midfielders: Meor Mohamed Azuan Hassan, Mohd Fitri Saari, Mohd Shahrul Nabil, Mohd Azammi Adabi, Mohd Marhan Mohd Jalil.

Forwards: Faizal Saari, Chua Boon Huat, Izwan Firdaus Ahmad Tajuddin, Mohd Firhan Ashaari, Nabil Fiqri Mohd Noor, Tengku Ahmad Tajudin Abdul Jalil.