

# Team S'pore check in

BY LEONARD LIM

ONE ran to the balcony for a glimpse of the city skyline, another headed for the plush, inviting bed, while the third simply soaked it all in.

For Singapore footballers Dhukhilan Jeevamani, Syazwan Radhi and Jeffrey Lightfoot, it was the first time they had set foot in the luxurious surroundings of a five-star hotel room.

The 14-year-olds, three-quarters of Singapore's Asian Youth Games starting back-line, checked into Swissotel The Stamford with their teammates at 2pm yesterday.

They were the first Singapore team to move into the Swissotel, the designated Games Village which will house athletes and officials for the June 29-July 7 event.

"Shiok la," were Dhukhilan's first words as he took in the view from the 25th floor. "Tonight, we can have a warm bath in the tub too."

After an hour's rest, the team headed to the Singapore Sports School for training.

The Influenza A (H1N1) virus - which has hit four Hong Kong footballers and one from the Philippines since Saturday - was also not far from their minds. "Eh, swine flu, better sit away," quipped one Singaporean player on the journey back to the Village, after someone complained that he was feeling warm after training.

But most of the teenagers were not overly bothered. Personal health kits containing a thermometer, surgical mask and hand sanitiser were given to the 18 footballers and team officials when they returned to the Swissotel at 7.30pm.

Temperatures were taken and those who did not have a fever - the whole team - were given a sticker for access to the dining hall on the second floor.

After a hearty buffet meal, it was back to their rooms and lights out at 11 pm. The room's novelty factor having worn off, the focus turned to the team's first game against Iran tomorrow.

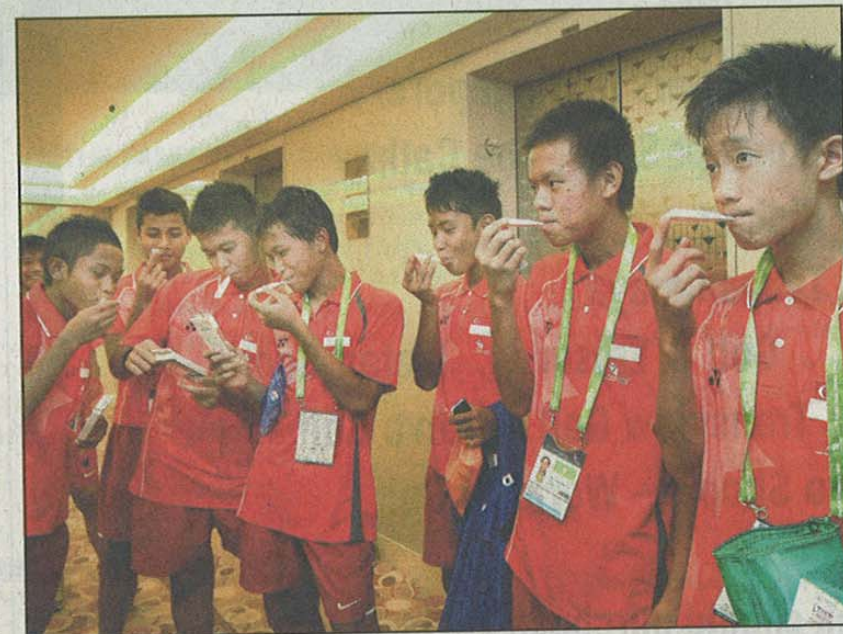
"This may be a hotel but it's no holiday for us," said Syazwan.



Jeffrey Lightfoot (from top, clockwise), Dhukhilan Jeevamani and Syazwan Radhi relaxing on their beds after check-in. ST PHOTOS: CHEW SENG KIM



Singapore's young footballers tucking into hotel fare at the dining hall on the Village's second floor. The meal was served up as a buffet.



Twice-daily temperature checks - before breakfast and dinner - for athletes are conducted as part of Influenza A (H1N1) checks.