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Fruits of Gunasegaran's labour

By John Bunyan

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TAIPING — A sports development project started two years ago by Taiping Children's Home has finally bore fruit as the children have not only excelled in sports, but also earned spots at local universities and colleges.

Project manager N. Gunasegaran said eight students from the programme secured places at local universities, while three others have been accepted into colleges and polytechnics.

"The children have benefited from a grant which comes from Socio Economic Development for the Indian Community (Sedic) in February for the home to run the project," he told *Malay Mail*.

Sedic is a unit under the Prime Minister's Department.

The children have been accepted into Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Univesiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.

He said the participants have won various sporting events at Perak Schools' cross country, Malaysian Schools' cross country Perak Schools' track and field championships,

Malaysian Schools' track and field championships, Negri Sembilan open athletic meet and Malaysian Indian Sports meets (Sukim).

There are 45 participants aged between 11 to 25 involved in the project which is also open to students and school leavers.

Gunasegaran explained the students are given sports training and motivational workshops.

Gunasegaran said the main objective of the project was to develop Indian youths by providing them with job opportunities and creating a platform for them to pursue tertiary education.

Yogashree Raja Sehkaran, 15, a participant from SMK Simpang, said the project's training has helped her win four gold medals — 100m, 4x400m, 4x100m and long jump — at the recent Sukim meet in Negri Sembilan.

Yogashree said the progamme taught her to prioritise sports and studies through a leadership course she attended.

Gokhul Raj Balakrishan, 19, who represented Perak at the Malaysian Open 100m event, said: "My communication and leadership skills have improved tremendously."

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Gunasegaran briefing Gokhul (left), Yogashree, (second from left), and Loshini Raja, 14 during a training session. — Picture by Farhan Najib Yusoff