

SPORT

Inclusion in Forbes list will help promote silat

Sazali Abdul Aziz

A text message about his inclusion in this year's Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list caught national silat exponent Sheik Farhan Sheik Alauddin so off guard yesterday that he thought there was a mix-up.

The 23-year-old was "a bit sceptical" and thought the message from a reporter was referring to his appearance in The Straits Times' package on "Young Singaporeans to Watch" published in December.

"So I googled it and I was genuinely shocked to see my name on the Forbes website. But of course, I'm happy to be recognised," said Farhan, who is the son of two-time silat world champion Sheik Alauddin.

The Forbes list comprises 10 categories, with Farhan listed among

30 names in the entertainment and sport category. The Asia list recognises entrepreneurs, scientists, activists and young leaders aged under 30.

In a write-up on its website, Forbes noted that Farhan is a three-time world champion and also won gold at the 2019 Asian Championships in China. He is the first silat exponent to be named on the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list, which debuted in 2016.

He shares the spotlight with other athletes like Thai-British driver Alex Albon - who recently raced in Formula One with Toro Rosso and Red Bull - and top ranked women's table tennis player Chen Meng of China.

Farhan, who completed his national service two weeks ago, told ST he hoped his inclusion in the Forbes list will help his sport gain new fans.



Three-time silat world champion Sheik Farhan Sheik Alauddin is the sixth Singaporean to be featured in the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list. ST FILE PHOTO

"Hopefully through this, more people will get interested in silat, or at least get to know about it," he said. "I feel like this (recognition) is more for the sport than for me. I am just a face."

The annual Forbes 30 Under 30 list was created in 2011, with the Asia list making its debut five years later.

There has been a Singaporean in the entertainment and sport category of each year's Asia list.

Singer-songwriter Joel Tan, also known as Gentle Bones, was the first to be featured, followed by Olympic champion Joseph Schooling (swimming), Paralympic three-gold medallist Yip Pin Xiu (swimming), bowler Shayna Ng, and Ivan Yeo, founder and chief executive officer of e-sports outfit Evos.

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