

# Frightening thoughts for Osmera deeply affected by stadium tragedy

By **Farah Azharie** - October 3, 2022 @ 7:58pm



National under-17 coach Osmera Omaro, who is in Bogor, Indonesia, for a football tournament, admitted he is deeply affected by the stadium tragedy in East Java that killed 125 people. -Courtesy Pic

KUALA LUMPUR: National under-17 coach Osmera Omaro, who is in Bogor, Indonesia, for a football tournament, admitted he is deeply affected by the stadium tragedy in East Java that killed 125 people.

Even as he and his team tried to comprehend the magnitude of the tragedy, they have been told that they have to play their remaining under-17 Asian Cup qualifiers behind closed doors at Pakansari Bogor Stadium.

Malaysia are fighting for one of the 16 spots in the under-17 Asian Cup proper in May next year.

"It's a tragedy that shouldn't have happened. I first heard about it (on Saturday) when we arrived at the hotel after our match (Malaysia beat Palestine 4-0).

"I felt very sad because I always go to football matches with my family. So I was deeply affected.

"I hope it doesn't get to that stage in Malaysia. It's scary when I imagine myself, my wife and my kids (aged 6, 9 and 15) there (at the Kanjuruhan stadium)," he said.

Osmera, who is a former Moktar Dahari Academy head coach, said he always takes his family to Darulmakmur Stadium to watch Sri Pahang matches.

"We absorb the whole experience... from buying jerseys, wearing them, buying tickets and sitting among the fans," he said.

On his team playing their remaining Group B matches in an empty stadium, Osmera said there isn't any disadvantage but admits it is a shame.

"Ideally, fans should be able to watch their stars, it's sad that it has come to this, it's a great shame for football in general," said Osmera.

"Our boys have the same sentiments."

Malaysia play Guam tomorrow, the United Arab Emirates on Friday and hosts Indonesia on Sunday.

In the Asian Under-16 competition in August, Malaysia failed to progress to the knockout stages when they finished second in Group C after beating

Cambodia 3-0 and drawing 1-1 with Myanmar and 2-2 with Australia.