

PARALYMPIC SPORTS

When disability sports in Malaysia started in the 1970s, the early sports were basketball, table tennis, badminton, darts and carrom. The Malaysian Paralympic Council (MPC), established in 1989, is the umbrella body for disability sports in the country. A unit under the Ministry of Youth and Sports oversees the development of these sports.



Miniature sheet issued in 2006 during the 9th FESPIC Games held in Kuala Lumpur.

Athletics and swimming were the first two disability sports to be introduced competitively in the country. Malaysians with a disability now compete in more than 20 sports. Rowing and wheelchair rugby are the only official Paralympic sports that are not played locally.

In addition to introducing new sports, the MPC also trains coaches, classifiers and technical officials. Malaysia has internationally accredited classifiers in wheelchair basketball, badminton, tenpin bowling and powerlifting as well as accredited technical officials for athletics, table tennis, wheelchair basketball and goalball.

Malaysia has been taking part in international disability sports competitions since the 1970s, including multi-sports and multi-disability competitions, single-disability competitions as well as single-sport competitions. The nation's world-class athletes with a disability include Wong Chee Kin, three-time Paralympic Games swimming finalist; Mohd Khassery Othman, Paralympic Games bronze medallist for high jump in 1992; and powerlifters P. Mariappan, two-time Paralympic Games bronze medallist, Siow Lee Chan, two-time gold medallist in the ASEAN Para Games and Cheok Kon Fatt, ASEAN Para Games gold medallist.

Malaysia has hosted various international events including the first ASEAN Para Games in 2001 and the ninth FESPIC (Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled) Games in 2006, where the country finished fourth with 44 gold, 60 silver and 71 bronze medals, the best ever outing for Malaysia at a FESPIC Games.

Malaysia participated in the formation of the ASEAN Para Sports Federation (APSF) in 2000 and the Asian Paralympic Council in 2002. The secretariats for both organizations are based in Kuala Lumpur.



Malaysian athletes Jap Soon Hung (front) and Mat Sani Kasbun training for the 9th FESPIC Games held in Kuala Lumpur in 2006.



1. The 50-metre freestyle swimming event at the 2004 Malaysian Paralympiad. The biennial Malaysian Paralympiad was originally known as the National Sport for the Disabled and was first held in 1982.

2. Dato' Napsiah Omar (left), Minister of National Unity and Social Development, handing over the Malaysian flag to Zainal Abu Zarin, chef-de-mission of the 1992 Paralympics contingent. The Malaysian paralympians returned from Barcelona with one silver and two bronze medals.

3. Wheelchair fencing competition organized during a sports carnival in Shah Alam in 2000.

4. Powerlifter P. Mariappan with the bronze medal he won at the 1988 Paralympics held in South Korea. He repeated the feat at the 1992 Barcelona Paralympics. A multiple international gold medal winner, Mariappan is one of Malaysia's most successful Paralympians.

5. The oath-taking ceremony of the 2006 Kuala Lumpur FESPIC (Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled) Games at the Cheras Football Stadium.

