

International paralympic events and achievements

Malaysian athletes have participated in international paralympic sports events since the 1972 Stoke Mandeville Games, the precursor to today's Paralympic Games. In recent times, Malaysian athletes with a disability have given medal-winning performances around the world. At the 2006 FESPIC Games held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian athletes won 44 gold medals.



Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak (second from right) receiving a souvenir from national powerlifter Cheok Kon Fatt after launching the 2006 FESPIC Games.

Hosting international events

Malaysia has hosted two major multi-sport and multi-disability competitions: the first ASEAN Para Games in 2001 and the ninth FESPIC (Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled) Games in 2006.

The ASEAN Para Games were organized in Kuala Lumpur from 25 to 30 October 2001. Athletics competitions were conducted at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil, while swimming competitions were held at the National Aquatic Centre. A total of 548 athletes from the ASEAN countries—Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam—participated in the competition. Malaysian competitors succeeded in setting 11 new regional records in athletics.

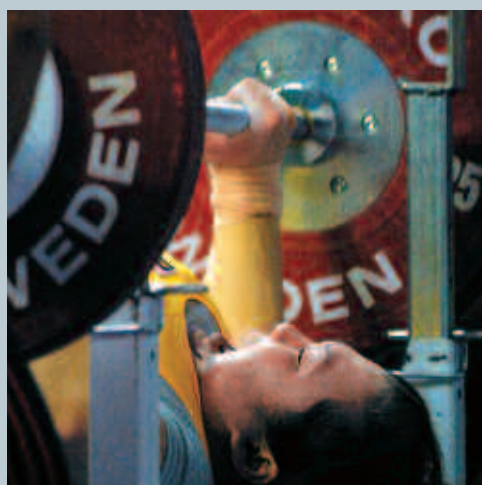


Flag-bearers entering the Kuala Lumpur Football Stadium in Cheras at the opening ceremony of the 2006 FESPIC Games.

Malaysia hosted the FESPIC Games from 25 November to 1 December 2006. Nearly 2300 athletes from 46 Asian and Oceanic countries took part in the competition. It was also the first time that countries from West Asia participated in the FESPIC Games. Athletes from the four major disability categories—the visually impaired, wheelchair and amputees, cerebral palsy and the intellectually disabled—competed in 19 events held

National Paralympians of the Year

In 2005, the National Sports Council (NSC) began recognizing the nation's top male and female athletes with a disability with a yearly award equivalent to the National Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year awards.



Powerlifter Siow Lee Chan, who created a new record at the Manila ASEAN Paragames in 2005 when she won the 92.5-kilogram category, was named 2005 Female Paralympian of the Year by the NSC. Siow also won a silver medal in the 75-kilogram category at the inaugural 2005 Asian Powerlifting Championship held in Kuala Lumpur.

In 2006, Faridul Masri was named Male Paralympian of the Year by the NSC after capturing three gold medals in the javelin, discus and shot put events at the 9th FESPIC Games in Kuala Lumpur.



In 2005, Mohd Salam Sidik was named Male Paralympian of the Year by the NSC after winning three gold medals in the World Wheelchair Archery Championship held in Rio de Janeiro. Mohd Salam won the 50-, 70- and 90-metre events.



The 2006 Female Paralympian of the Year was Zainab Mohamad Ashari who won gold medals in the 100-, 4x100- and 4x400-metre events, two silvers in the 200-metre and long jump competitions and one bronze in the 400-metre race at the 2006 FESPIC Games.

at venues in and around Kuala Lumpur. During the competition, 27 International Paralympic Committee (IPC) world records were broken, while more than 60 new FESPIC Games records were set.

Malaysia has also played host to international Paralympic single sport competitions including the 2002 IPC World Powerlifting Championship, 2004 Asia and South Pacific Archery Championship, 2004 IPC World Bowls Championship, 2004 Asian Paralympic Badminton Cup, and the Asia and South Pacific Table Tennis Championship and Asia Tenpin Bowling Championship in 2005.

A tradition of success

Malaysia first took part in the third FESPIC Games in Hong Kong in 1982. Malaysian athletes in three disability categories—physical disability, visually impaired and cerebral palsy—participated in the event. Since then, Malaysia has taken part in all the subsequent FESPIC Games, which are held every four years. Malaysia has won medals in all the FESPIC Games in which it has participated. However, the best performance was at the 2006 FESPIC Games in Kuala Lumpur when Malaysia won 44 gold, 60 silver and 71 bronze medals.

Malaysia has been taking part in the Paralympic Games since 1988. The Malaysian contingent participated in athletics, swimming and powerlifting at the 1988 Paralympics in Seoul, and P Mariappan won the country's first Paralympic medal, a bronze, for powerlifting. Malaysia also brought home medals—one silver and one bronze in powerlifting and one bronze in athletics—from the Barcelona Paralympic Games in 1992. These games marked the first time that medal-winning Malaysian athletes with a disability received cash incentives from the government.

Since 2002, the Commonwealth Games has integrated events for elite athletes with a disability (EAD). Malaysia sent EAD participants to both the 2002 Manchester and 2006 Melbourne editions of the Commonwealth Games. In 2002, Malaysia won one silver medal in athletics, two bronze medals in lawn bowls and one bronze medal in powerlifting.



Visually impaired athlete Mohd Hisham Khaironi (in yellow) running in the 100-metre race at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Four years earlier in Manchester, Mohd Hisham won a silver medal in the same event.

Other disability sports events

The Special Olympics is a separate programme from the Paralympics. Whereas the latter has, since its 2000 edition in Sydney, been open only to athletes with a physical disability, the Special Olympics caters to athletes with intellectual disabilities. The Special Olympics World Games, like the Paralympic Games, take place once every four years. Malaysia participated in its first Special Olympics World Games in Ireland in 2003.

The first Special Olympics state body in Malaysia was established in Sabah in 1986, and, as of 2006, Sarawak, Penang, Selangor and Perak also have their own governing bodies. Special Olympics Malaysia is awaiting registration under the Sports Development Act 1997 to be recognized as the national governing body of the Special Olympic programme. The first Special Olympics event in Malaysia, held in Kuala Lumpur in 1992, offered track and field events. The inaugural National Games for the Special Olympics were held in Sabah in 2006.

The hearing impaired do not take part in the Paralympic Games, but in the Deaflympics, which is a single-disability competition. Hearing-impaired athletes play the full spectrum of sports which the able-bodied play. In Malaysia, hearing-impaired sports are governed by the Malaysia Sports Federation of the Deaf.



The Malaysian contingent at the opening ceremony of the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai. The 20 athletes returned home with a medal haul of four gold, eight silver and seven bronze medals from the athletics, bocce and bowling events.



1. Visually impaired Lee Sheng Chow led the oath recitation at the opening ceremony of the 1998 FESPIC Games. He finished the competition with two gold medals in javelin, shot put and a silver medal in the discus.
2. Wong Chee Kin, a gold medalist at the 2006 FESPIC Games in Kuala Lumpur, bagged five medals—a gold, three silver and a bronze—at the 2001 CP World Games in Nottingham.
3. Azmi Lamin was a member of the trio that won a lawn bowls bronze medal in the men's triples physically disabled event at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester.
4. A two-gold medal winner at the 2006 FESPIC Games, Nurisyafawati Arshukri had previously won gold medals in the 100-metre and long jump events at the ASEAN Para Games in Manila in 2005.
5. Mat Sani Kasbun (left) edging Mohd Sani Harun in the 200-metre wheelchair race at the Malaysia Paralympics Athletics Open, 2005.
6. Malaysian powerlifters (from left) P. Mariappan, Benson Patta and Cheok Kon Fatt returning home after winning seven gold and two silver medals at the 1993 World Wheelchair Games in England.