

ABLELINK

The Abilympics Newsletter

ABILYMPICS MALAYSIA COMMITTEE

ADVISORY PANEL:

Dato' Muhamad Zaili Muhammad
Yusuf

Dato' Mah Hassan Omar
Datuk Wira Roslan Ab Rahman

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Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman

VICE CHAIRMAN:

Datin Wira Ungku Ashiela Hamzah

SECRETARIAT:

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Ms. Fishah Hassan

PROGRAMME & FINANCE:

Ms. Rose Ng

OPERATIONS & STRATEGY:

Dato' George Thomas

PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS:

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We welcome donations to support the cause of our Abilympians, which will help to prepare them for the International Abilympics competition and build their dreams.

Donations can be channelled to:

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We thank you for your kind generosity.



THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Dear Friends,

Welcome to AbleLink, the tenth edition of the Abilympics Malaysia newsletter. This edition certainly adds more meaning and significance as we successfully concluded our journey of the 10th International Abilympics competition in Metz, France.

It was indeed a remarkable journey. What was supposed to be a quadrennial event took seven years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. Amidst all these, we came out strong and victorious with one silver medal, two bronze medals and two special excellence awards. Congratulations to the winners and all Abilympians; kudos to you for doing your best.

We are all proud of how far you have come. We trust that the Abilympics has been and will continue to be a beacon of hope and empowerment for you.

We would not have gone through this journey without the support of our sponsors, partners, trainers, employees, volunteers, Abilympians and each one of you who have worked together to keep the fire burning and return triumphant.

I take the opportunity to earnestly thank our Main Partner, Allianz Malaysia Berhad and our Strategic Partners; Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) and Selangor Cheshire Home (RACS), for the unwavering support in making this dream come true for our Abilympians. We are also very grateful to our Skills Training Partners and all our trainers who have dedicated their time and effort to guide our Abilympians patiently. Thank you to the Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education; the Ministry of Human Resources, Department of Skills Development, Centre for Instructor and Advanced Skill Training (CIASST); College of Creative Arts of University Technology MARA; Lee Flower Design Academy, Studio Dr. Sabzali and The Green Hero. We also greatly appreciate the support of the National Council Of Welfare and Social Development Malaysia (MAKPEM), the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and the Ministry of Education Malaysia. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in one way or another in making the 10th International Abilympics competition a success.

To each one of you, we sincerely thank you for your support. We are grateful for your continuous contribution and encouragement as we made this hopeful journey to the 10th International Abilympics competition.

With one significant milestone accomplished, our journey continues with hope and anticipation. We have started our effort for the 11th International Abilympics competition, which will take place in Helsinki, Finland, in 2027. As such, we commenced the Abilympics Awareness Campaign with roadshows across the country to select and train the next Abilympians.

"With one significant milestone accomplished, our journey continues with hope and anticipation."

At the same time, we want to ensure that no one with a disability is left behind, and are revisiting all skill categories. This includes participation in new skill categories, such as Massage, where people who are blind can also participate. On the other hand, although all our Abilympians are highly skilled, we still need to achieve the international benchmark. As such, some skill categories may be discontinued while we focus more on skills such as arts and cooking. We hope to raise additional funds to send two participants per skill category for a healthy competition. We are also exploring having our own judges to screen the participants for the international competition.

There are many upcoming efforts and initiatives to create awareness of the Abilympics. This year, Sabah will host the International Day for Persons with Disabilities in Malaysia, where last year's finalists will be honoured.

With greater awareness, we can reach countless talents. I also trust that my recent appointment as a Member of the Council of Skills Malaysia under the Ministry of Human Resources will help provide better recognition of the Abilympics within the Ministry, where we can garner many good initiatives.

I invite you to read our newsletter to learn more about our initiatives.

I also want to thank all of you for your continuous support of the Abilympics.

Till we meet again, take care and enjoy reading our newsletter.

Yours Sincerely,

Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman
President, Malaysian Council for
Rehabilitation (MCR),
Chairman of Abilympics Committee



What an Amazing Journey!

The 10th International Abilympics competition has been a great success after a seven-year pause.

With unwavering dedication, the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) commenced preparations for the 10th International Abilympics competition immediately after the ninth edition in 2016. Its efforts included a nationwide talent search roadshow in 2017 and a national-level competition in 2018 to select the best talents to represent the country.

The competition was initially scheduled to be held in Moscow, Russia, in September 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war delayed it, and it was then rescheduled to be held in Metz, France, from 23 to 25 March 2023.

16 Abilympians participated in 14 of the 45 categories in the competition. They were among 420 contestants from 22 countries. The Abilympians did Malaysia proud by bringing home one silver medal, two bronze medals, and two special awards, making it the biggest win for Malaysia since 1995.



Shahrul Nizam (left) and Najwa Mahmud (right) in deep concentration at the competition.



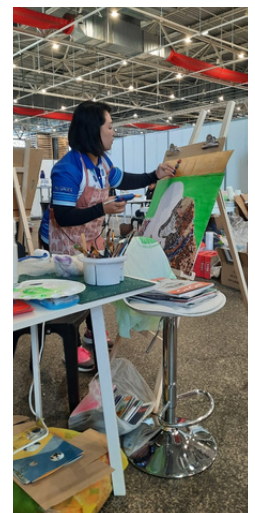
A warm welcome back home for the Abilympians.



from left to right: Wan Muhammad Hafizunif, Nur Amiratul Farahin, Anis Humairah and Muhammad Hanif Naufal with their medals.



Top left: New friendships were formed.



Right: Rosemary Yvonne Marcus working on her masterpiece.

Nur Amiratul Farahin Ab Rahman, 25, won a silver medal in the Painting and Waste Reuse category; Wan Muhammad Hafizunif Wan Roslan, 26, secured a bronze in the Cake Decorating category, and Muhammad Hanif Naufal Mohd Mazni, 22, acquired a bronze in the Restaurant Services category. Muhammad Hanif also won an Excellence Award in the Restaurant Service category, and Anis Humairah Riduwan, 21, won the same award in the Embroidery category.

Heartfelt congratulations and a big round of applause to all the Abilympians for their outstanding performance and for making Malaysia proud!

Appreciation for the Abilympians

The Abilympians received Certificates of Appreciation on two different occasions for their hard work and effort at the 10th International Abilympics competition.

After a long and amazing journey, the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) organised the 10th International Abilympics Appreciation Ceremony. The ceremony, held on 5 August 2024 at The Majapahit restaurant, Kuala Lumpur, was a testament to the great efforts and achievements of all the Abilympians. Each of them received a Certificate of Appreciation, a symbol of their strong resilience and outstanding skills, and were honoured with valuable cash prizes, a tangible acknowledgement of their talents, making them feel truly valued and appreciated.



Quek Kia Ann presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Anis Humairah Riduwan.



Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman presenting a token of appreciation to Quek Kia Ann.

Quek Kia Ann, the Director of the Community Division from the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, presented the certificate to the winners, while Dr Mahmood Merican, Founding Member and Advisor of MCR, presented the certificate to the rest of the Abilympians.

MCR members, partners, trainers, family members of the Abilympians and supporters of the Abilympics also attended the ceremony.

The winners; Nur Amiratul Farahin Ab Rahman, Wan Muhammad Hafizunif Wan Roslan, Muhammad Hanif Naufal Mohd Mazni and Anis Humairah Riduwan, also received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Skills Development Department, Ministry of Human Resource.

They received their certificates at The Prime Minister's Golden Hand Award Ceremony (MATEPM) and Skilled Person Award (ATM) 2023 held on 23 November 2023 at the Shah Alam Convention Centre, Selangor.



A picture perfect with the Abilympians at The Majapahit restaurant.



The winners with the Chairman of Abilympics Malaysia, Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman (third from right) and Ms. Rose Ng, Finance & Program Coordinator of Abilympics Malaysia at the Shah Alam Convention Centre.

Rehabilitation International Centennial Celebration

The Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) participated in and significantly contributed to the Rehabilitation International Centennial Celebration held in Beijing, China from 19 to 23 May 2023.



Children singing a song composed by the President of Rehabilitation International, Zhang Haidi, who is also the Chairman of China Disabled Persons Federation.



Datin Rosalind Chew (extreme left), President of National Council for the Blind Malaysia, Wong Yoon Loong (third from left), Rose Ng (centre) and Nor Rafishah (third from right) with the President of the International Abilympics Federation, Shinobu Wajima (second from right) and other delegates.

The Deputy President of MCR, Wong Yoon Loong; Honorary Treasurer, Rose Ng; and Executive Officer, Nor Rafishah Binti Md Hassan, along with officials from relevant government departments and leaders of international organisations for persons with disabilities from around the globe, came together in a spirit of global collaboration at this historic event.

The event focused on many areas, including rehabilitation, education, employment, and community inclusion. As a result, an outcome document was released and submitted to the United Nations with recommendations for advancing equal participation and all-around development of persons with disabilities in the next century.

Wong Yoon Loong, on behalf of MCR, presented a paper on 'Legal Policy and Implementation of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' at one of the parallel sessions. At the same time, Rose and Nor Rafishah attended the Rehabilitation International Asia Pacific Region meeting.

Many activities were held concurrently throughout the event, with exhibitions on assistive technology and cultural activities.

The celebration inspired MCR to organise a conference on 'Advancing Disability Rights through the Jakarta Declaration' on 2 December 2023.



Rose and Nor Rafishah with participants of the Rehabilitation International Asia Pacific region meeting chaired by the Vice-President, Asia Pacific, Ar. Dr. Joseph Kwan (standing, back row, fifth from right)



The Malaysian delegates with other participants.

Conference on Advancing Disability Rights through the Jakarta Declaration

The Malaysian Council of Rehabilitation (MCR) hosted a conference on 2 December 2023, a significant event that focused on advancing disability rights through the influential Jakarta Declaration.



President of the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR), Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman presenting a token of appreciation to Chua Choon Hwa.

Titled 'Advancing Disability Rights Through the Jakarta Declaration,' the conference was held at Wyndham Grand Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur.

Officiated by Chua Choon Hwa, Deputy Secretary General (Strategic), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, the conference served as a dynamic platform for discussions, insights, and actionable strategies focused on applying cross-sectoral transformative partnerships to localise the 4th Asia-Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities declaration.



Some of the participants at the conference.

The event commenced with a keynote address by Dr Srinivas Tata, Director of the Social Development Division at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), followed by other distinguished speakers, advocates, and stakeholders dedicated to propelling change in the landscape of disability rights.

Following these insightful discussions, Deputy President of MCR, Wong Yoon Loong, on behalf of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), presented the conference resolutions, representing the collective insights and strategies agreed upon during the event.



Speakers and organising team of the conference.



Handing over the resolution to the Department of Social Welfare.

Subsequently, on 2 April 2024, representatives from MCR handed over the resolution to the Department of Social Welfare.

TVET Carnival

The Centre for Instructor Advanced Skill Training (CIAST) recently took the initiative to organise a Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Carnival.



At the Abilympics Malaysia booth with painting by Abilympian, Nur Amiratul Farahin.

The carnival was held on 19 and 20 September 2023 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the CIAST Training Centre in Shah Alam, Selangor. Some of the Abilympians participated in this carnival, demonstrating skills such as floral arrangement, painting, and waste reuse.

The carnival garnered significant interest, providing better awareness of the Abilympics.



Datin Wira Ungku Ashiela, Vice Chairman of Abilympics Malaysia sharing a brochure with a visitor.



Mohd Yunus with his trainer and floral arrangement in the backdrop.

Thank You, Daily Coffee

What began as the purchase of a painting produced by an Abilympian has motivated great support.

Daily Coffee, a local homegrown French-inspired coffee retailer owned by Nbrand (M) Sdn. Bhd had previously purchased a painting by Abilympian, Nur Amiratul Farahin Binti Ab. Rahman. Through this, the Abilympics' cause inspired the coffee retailer to pledge its support for the 11th International Abilympics competition.

The coffee chain will support Abilympics Malaysia by selling a series of eye-catching merchandise in its 13 outlets nationwide. A percentage of these merchandise sales will be channelled to the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) to support talented artists representing Malaysia globally at the next International Abilympics competition.



Daily Coffee representatives with the representatives of the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation and Abilympian, Nur Amiratul Farahin.

This initiative is Daily Coffee's way forward in showing appreciation and gesture to Abilympics Malaysia for making the nation proud at the 10th International Abilympics competition.

The special preview for the first batch of merchandise collection will be held on 27 September 2024 at 1301 By RMC, Sunsuria Avenue, Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

Abilympics Awareness Campaigns

The Abilympics Malaysia Committee has organised a series of roadshows to raise awareness across all states and to find the next batch of Abilympians to compete in the 11th International Abilympics competition, which will be held in Helsinki, Finland, in 2027.



Sarawak

The first 2024 Abilympics Awareness Campaign roadshow cum Painting and Waste Reuse workshop kicked off on 28 June 2024 at the Sarawak OKU Skills Development Association (SOSDA) in Kuching, Sarawak. The Sarawak level campaign was a collaborative effort of the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR) and SOSDA. An exhibition and carnival followed this event on 29 June 2024 at the Boulevard Shopping Mall in Kuching.



Norhazlina guides the participants at the Painting and Waste Reuse workshop.

The roadshow began on the first day with an opening remark by Rose Ng, the Finance and Program Co-ordinator of Abilympics Malaysia. Fazlilawati Fadzil, a Selayang Community College skill partner, then gave a talk on the Food and Hospitality category, after which Norhazlina Zainuddin from The Green Hero enlightened the participants about the Painting and Waste Reuse workshop.



Education Minister, YB Fadlina Sidek receives the 10th International Abilympics competition coffee table book from Rose Ng and Dunstan Lim.

For the participants, which included children with disabilities, their parents, trainers, and teachers, it was their first experience in combining painting with waste reuse. Several special needs students in the Secondary School Integrated Special Education programme participated in the workshop. The President of SOSDA, Dunstan Lim, invited the Marketing Department team of the Boulevard Shopping Mall, and they were briefed on the purpose of the roadshow and workshop. The next day, MCR and SOSDA participated in the 2024 Sarawak State Level Marketability Carnival Exhibition for special needs

students in the Secondary School Integrated Special Education Programme organised by the Sarawak State Education Department. The carnival included various competitions and forums at the Event Hall in the Boulevard Shopping Mall.

This exhibition served as a platform for MCR to promote the 11th International Abilympics Competition to event visitors. YB Fadlina Sidek, the Minister of Education of Malaysia, visited the Abilympics Malaysia booth. Rose informed her about MCR and the Abilympics, who then presented her with a coffee table book highlighting the 10th International Abilympics Competition.

MCR thanks Dunstan Lim and SOSDA for the collaboration and support.



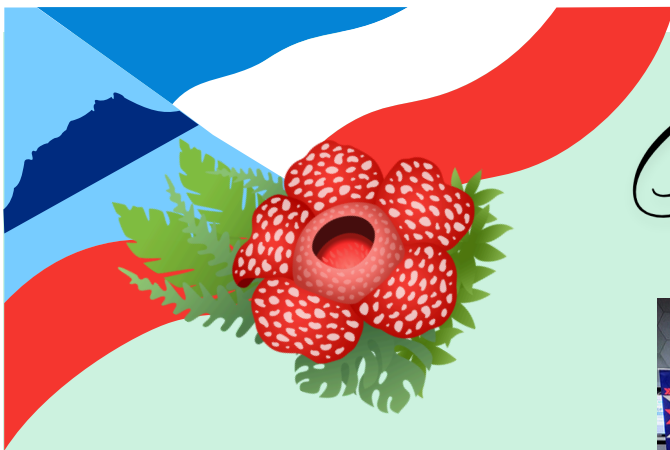
The Marketing team of the Boulevard Shopping Mall showed great interest in the workshop.



Participants give thumbs up for the workshop.



A competition being held at the Mall.



Sabah

The Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR), in cooperation with the Sabah Council of Social Services (MPMS) and Sabah Cheshire Home and Services, organised the first roadshow for the 11th International Abilympics competition on 14 October 2023. The campaign took place at the Sabah State Library headquarters.



The participants of the workshops are all smiles after a fruitful day.



Keeping busy at the Floral Arrangement, Painting, and Waste Reuse skill workshops.



Signing of certificates.

The event began with speeches by the Director of Sabah General Welfare Services Department, the Managing President of MPMS, Tuan Jais Asri, and the President of MCR, Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman. Presentations and a video sharing of the 10th International Abilympics competition held in Metz, France, followed.

The Guest of Honour, Maria Chong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community Development and Sabah People's Welfare, delivered a speech and then officially launched the Sabah Abilympics Roadshow and the Floral Arrangement, Painting, and Waste Reuse skill workshops which were held concurrently.

The workshops were conducted by Abilympics Malaysia's skill partners from Lee Flower Design Academy and The Green Hero for participants who were Deaf, persons with learning disabilities, persons with physical disabilities, and wheelchair users. The participants had a rewarding learning experience, which concluded successfully, marking a significant achievement for all involved. For most of them, learning to use waste materials and turn rubbish into works of art was a first-time experience.

MCR extends its heartfelt appreciation to MPMS and Sabah Cheshire Home and Services for their invaluable support in organising the roadshow.



From left to right: Joanne Lee; Executive Secretary of MPMS, Maria Chong, Tuan Jais Asri, Lawrence Hee Qui Shing; President of Sabah Cheshire Home and Services, and Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman; Chairman of Abilympics Malaysia.



Maria Chong looks with admiration as an artist skillfully draws in the workshop.



The Abilympics Awareness Campaign kicked off in Kuala Lumpur on 26 July 2024 at the National Council of Welfare and Social Development Malaysia (MAKPEM) office.

Senator Isaiah D. Jacob, a member of the Parliament of Malaysia, launched the Campaign. Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulaiman, the President of the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR), was also present to grace the event.



A gift of a beautiful souvenir.

The event featured an art exhibition booth and art demonstrations by former Abilympians from the Painting and Waste Reuse, and Embroidery skill categories. For the 11th International Abilympics competition, participants will be selected to compete at the state level and then progress to the national competition. They will then receive training at various vocational centres and universities nationwide to further develop their skills.



The Committee members of MCR with Senator Isaiah.

MAKPEM and MCR will conduct training and help them develop their skills.



Senator Isaiah and Datin Paduka Khatijah deliver their speeches.



Senator Isaiah and Datin Paduka Khatijah listen to a briefing.

10TH INTERNATIONAL ABILYMPICS COMPETITION

METZ, FRANCE

23 - 25 MARCH 2023



WINNERS

WINNING MOMENTS

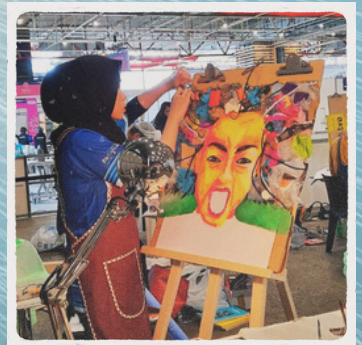


Before I left for France, I started to feel anxious. However, I continued working hard and was confident I could do it. I was nervous about the cake decoration competition because the opposing team was highly creative. I tried not to be affected by it until the nervousness was gone, and I managed to focus on my cake decoration. Finally, my name was called out after the competition as one of the winners. I was surprised to win a bronze medal. Therefore, I am happy to have done my best for myself and Malaysia by winning the competition. I want to thank the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation (MCR), my family, and the Malaysian people who supported me.



**WAN MUHAMMAD
HAFIZUNIF BIN WAN ROSLAN**

Cake Decoration
BRONZE MEDAL



**NUR AMIRATUL
FARAHIN BTE
AB. RAHMAN**

Painting &
Waste Reuse
SILVER MEDAL

I am happy and proud to have been selected to represent Malaysia for the first time. I didn't stop praying to win. Although nervous, I felt confident and brave when I competed there. Thank you to my family, trainer, MCR, and all who have been by my side throughout my journey in the Abilympics.



10TH INTERNATIONAL ABILYMPICS COMPETITION

METZ, FRANCE

23 - 25 MARCH 2023



WINNERS

WINNING MOMENTS



Thank you for this opportunity. My experience participating in the Abilympics in Metz, France, is truly significant. It was a rare opportunity to showcase my talent and skills at an international level. I am very proud to represent the country and meet so many great individuals from different backgrounds. Being awarded the Certificate of Excellence is a great honour for me. It gives recognition to my efforts and dedication in this field, and I am very grateful for the support I have received throughout this journey. It also motivates me to keep trying and improving my work. In addition, this experience also opened my eyes to the potential I have, which I may not have realized before. Being on the international stage and interacting with participants worldwide has inspired me to keep improving and not give up easily, even when faced with challenges. In addition, support from MCR, family, friends, and coaches is vital to helping me achieve this success. They have been my backbone throughout the preparation and competition process. This experience taught me that hard work, discipline, and tireless spirit are the keys to success. This Certificate of Excellence is proof that all my efforts are worth it, and I hope this can inspire others to pursue their dreams.

**MUHAMMAD HANIF NAUFAL
BIN MOHD MAZNI**

Painting & Waste Reuse
**BRONZE MEDAL
EXCELLENCE AWARD**



ANIS HUMAIRAH RIDUWAN
Painting & Waste Reuse
EXCELLENCE AWARD



The sky is not the limit but the beginning of your greatness. Every challenge is an opportunity to highlight your extraordinary abilities. Show the world that nothing is impossible when you work hard with determination and passion that never dies. Keep going, fight the good fight, and do your magic! Abilympics has proven that my success on the world stage results from perseverance, relentless effort, and self-belief. This is not just a personal victory but an inspiration to all that there is no limit to what we can achieve. I am also grateful for the tremendous support of everyone who journeyed with me.