


# NewspaperSG

## Good news for silat amid gloom

THE STRAITS TIMES, 19 May 2009, Page 30

 Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL30032

Printer-Friendly Page

# Good news for silat amid gloom

IT MADE the news for the wrong reasons last month.

But the Singapore Silat Federation (Persisi) had cause for cheer last weekend.

Singapore captured six golds in the match category and four in the artistic category at the Sijori Pencak Silat Championships in Johor.

**JONATHAN WONG** BY

With their 10 titles, Singapore finished ahead of nine other teams from Malaysia and Indonesia. It was their sixth successive overall title in the six years of the event.

Although the competition featured only state teams, Persisi head coach Mohamad Hidayat was pleased with how his young charges fared.

"They did very well against much older opposition," said Hidayat of his

squad, whose average age was 18.

“Developing our athletes to compete in international events remains our priority. We will continue with our training programme and not let other matters distract us.”

The titles have come as a boost, given that the association’s funding was suspended last month by the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) after audit checks revealed problems with its financial controls.

SSC spokesman Alvin Hang revealed that the situation was “progressing well” and that a follow-up audit would be carried out in July.

He said: “The SSC will continue to closely oversee the proper disbursement of funds on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the sport of silat does not suffer.”

Silat’s hopes for success at December’s South-east Asia Games in Laos are likely to be the youngsters who did well in Johor.

Among the budding crop is Singapore Sports School student Nurindah Mursani, the junior world champion.

The 16-year-old won an artistic doubles gold and a silver in the team category on her Sijori debut.

Muhammad Shakir Juanda, who was fourth in the 2007 SEA Games in Korat, Thailand, was another who collected gold in the match C class.

The 21-year-old trounced his Bintan opponent 5-0 on Sunday.

He said: “The level of competition may not have been that high, but it’s a good way to start the year and to build momentum ahead of bigger competitions.”

He is due to compete in the inaugural Asian Martial Arts Games in August and the Asian Indoor Games in November.

PHOTO: JI



Medal winners (from left) Muhammad Shakir Juanda, 21, Nurindah Mursani, 16, Nur Shafiqah, 15, and Syarif Hidayatullah, 20. They are likely to form the core of the team that will represent Singapore at the South-east Asia Games in December. PHOTO: JOSEPH NAIR FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

JOSEPH NAIR FOR THE STRAITS TIMES