



The umbrella organisation for gymnastics in Indonesia is Persani.

It is the abbreviation for the Indonesian Gymnastics Federation.

Since its foundation on 14 July 1963, Persani immediately sent athletes to the Games of the Developing Countries or Ganefo I - four months later - in Jakarta

The following is the history and dynamics of gymnastics in Indonesia, which has experienced ups and downs to mould the country's best gymnasts.

- Gymnastics was first introduced in Indonesia during the Dutch colonial period. In 1912, sport was introduced in Indonesia. In that year, gymnastics was also taught in schools when physical education was introduced as a compulsory subject.
- In 1918, Dr H. F. Minkema, a medical officer in the Dutch navy, opened a gymnastics course in Malang based on the Swedish system. At the time, the course was primarily aimed at soldiers and teachers.

Two years earlier, in 1916, the Swedish gymnastics system had replaced the German system that had been taught in schools since 1912. It was thanks to Minkema that gymnastics spread and became popular in Indonesia.

Although the officer founded a gymnastics course in Malang, it is assumed that the origin of the spread of gymnastics was in Bandung.

- **Because in 1922**, the first gymnastics school was opened in the City of Flowers, namely the MGSS (Militaire Gymnastiek en Sporschool).

The graduates of this school later became Swedish gymnastics teachers at schools in the Dutch East Indies. This favourable development paved the way for the MGSS to establish branches in five other cities. The branches were located in Bogor, Malang, Surakarta, Medan and Probolinggo.

- However, the Japanese invasion of Indonesia in 1942 attempted to shift the face of Western-orientated gymnastics back to the East. In Japan, all forms of gymnastics were banned in schools and communities. Instead, schools were required to perform 'taiso', a type of morning exercise, before the start of lessons. The exercise was accompanied by sounds from the radio, which were broadcast simultaneously. But the Taiso era did not last long. During the period of independence, the exercises prescribed by Japan were rejected in many places.
- ¶ With the rejection of Taiso, the gymnastics adopted by the Dutch government was reintroduced in schools, which was then modified in the Indonesian style:

As cited in Physical Education, Sports and Health (2006) by Asep Kurnia Nenggala, the STO Bandung gymnastics system was used from 1964. The system was developed by Irsan M. A. and Imam Hidayat.

History and function of 'Persani' - the umbrella organisation for gymnastics in Indonesia

- 'Persani' was founded in 1963 and was first chaired by R. Suhadi. Under his leadership, Persani brought in a number of coaches from the PRC to train the athletes. Haryanto and Moh Nor El-Ibrahim write in Sports Introducing Basic Gymnastics Techniques (2012) that the coaching of athletes by coaches from the PRC served to prepare the Indonesian gymnastics team for the Asian-African Conference I and Ganefo Asia.

The performance of the Indonesian gymnastics team has improved under the guidance of the coach from the People's Republic of China. However, it is unfortunate that the coaching had to be interrupted for a while due to the political atmosphere of the G30S. The PRC coach has to return to his country. The decline in performance was the result that the Indonesian gymnastics community had to accept during this time.

- Attempts were made to catch up until 1967. For example, one of the Indonesian coaches, T. J. Purba, was sent to East Germany, then known as the GDR, to study in Leipzig, to study at the then German High School of Physical Culture ('Hochschule für Körperkultur'; DHfK) in Leipzig. Purba then spent a total of 26 months working in Europe.

As a further starting point, artistic gymnastics was introduced for the first time at the VII. National Indonesian Sports Week (PON) in Surabaya. Since the PON in 1969, gymnastics has been part of the national sports competitions in Indonesia.



<< **Rifda IRFANALUTHFI** (INA) made history, when she became the first Indonesian gymnast in history to successfully qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, which will take place from 26 July to 11 August, by finishing rank 52 in the all-around World Championships 2023 in Antwerp.

This makes Rifda Irfanaluthfi one of 15 athletes who will be competing in Paris, together with, for example

- the archer Arif Dwi Pangestu,
- climber Desak Made Rita Kusuma Dewi and weightlifter
- weightlifter Eko Yuli Irawan.

To this day, artistic gymnastics in particular is one of the sports that has helped Indonesia to achieve sporting success at international level.

The FIG Executive Board's decision to award the 2025 World Gymnastics Championships to host Indonesia for the first time is certainly a strong impetus for the development of national and international artistic gymnastics!

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