

Sports Authority of India

Amit Panghal, Bridge duo Pranab Bardhan and Shibnath Sarkar win gold; India hits highest tally ever in Asian Games

- **India pick up 15 gold; 24 silver and 30 bronze**
- **Record total of 69 medals for India**
- **India equal 67-year-old record for 15 gold medals**
- **Women's squash team pick up silver**
- **Indian men's hockey team beats Pakistan in bronze play-off**

Jakarta, September 1: Amit Panghal took the Indian medals tally onto a new terrain as his boxing gold in the men's 46-49kg became India's 14th gold medal at the 18th Asian Games and it was India's 66th medal, moving past the 65 mark, which was the achieved by India at the 2010 edition in Guangzhou.

A little later, bridge making its debut at the Games, won India's 15th gold in Jakarta and that equaled India's best gold tally, which was achieved in 1951 at the inaugural Asian Games in New Delhi. Pranab Bardhan, 60, and Shibnath Sarkar, 56, won the gold. In the process, Bardhan became the oldest gold medallist at these Games.

The Indian women's squash team's terrific run ended at the hands of Hong Kong, who beat the Indians 2-0 after Sunayna Kuruvilla and Joshna Chinappa, lost their singles.

In men's hockey India beat arch-rivals Pakistan 2-1 for a bronze medal, that took Saturday's medal haul to two gold, one silver and one bronze and a total of 69 medals, comprising 15 gold, 24 silver and 30 bronze.

BOXING – Amit Panghal lone boxer to strike gold, stuns Olympic champion in 49kg final

Making his debut at the Asian Games, Amit Panghal carried on his sensational run with two successive split decisions in the semis and the final to win the biggest medal of his young career.

The 22-year-old, who was second at the Commonwealth Games earlier this year, was also third at the Asian Championships in Tashkent last year, when Dusmatov won the gold. Also at the 2017 World Championships, Panghal lost to Dusmatov in the quarter finals.

So, for Amit to thwart the Olympic champion in the final here in Jakarta was indeed a great effort.

The fight in the first round seemed to be pretty even as the Indian kept his distance against the Olympic champ but got in a few of his own. Panghal was quite sharp in the second round and seemed to hold his own against Dusmatov who looked he was going through the gears. Dusmatov wasn't able to land any big blows while Panghal was able to hit a couple.

The Indian went on the defensive in the third round and tried to get the Uzbek to attack him. Dusmatov, not one to go down lightly, took the attack to the Indian and there were times in the third round when it seemed the Olympic champion would rebound quickly but Panghal held on for a 3-2 verdict and a super win for the gold.

Panghal was the lone Indian boxer to make it to the final and he did by beating Philippines' Carlo Paalam in a 3-2 verdict.

BRIDGE – Experienced Pranab Bardhan and Shibnath Sarkar strike gold in bridge

It was ironical, that Bridge which made its debut at the Asian Games in 2018, produced India's 15th gold which helped the contingent equal the best haul ever achieved back in 1951 in New Delhi at the inaugural Games.

Pranab Bardhan and Shibnath Sarkar clinched the top honours in the men's pair event on Saturday. At 60, Bardhan also became the oldest gold medallist at these Games, while his partner, Shibnath is 56.

The Chinese pair of Lixin Yang and Gang Chen won the silver and the Indonesian combination of Henky Lasut and Freddy Eddy Manoppo bagged the bronze. Another Indian pair of Sumit Mukherjee and Debabrata Majumder finished at the ninth place.

Earlier Bridge contributed two bronze medals in the Men's and Mixed Team events.

HOCKEY – Bronze medal for India; Akashdeep and Harmanpreet score in India's 2-1 win over Pakistan

India won the bronze medal in Men's Hockey registering a 2-1 win over Pakistan.

Akashdeep Singh and Harmanpreet Singh scored for India, while Muhammad Aziz reduced the margin for Pakistan.

India won the gold at the 2014 Asian Games, but lost to Malaysia in a penalty shootout this time in the semi-finals.

India overcame the disappointment of not making the final and began positively. Akashdeep Singh's field goal in the 3rd minute put Pakistan on the back foot early in the game. India built on the momentum as they made two more attempts at field goals by Chinglensana Singh in the 6th minute and Mandeep Singh in the 14th minute but Pakistan held out.

The second quarter though saw Pakistan raise their game and show some attacking display as Ajaz Ahmad, Muhammad Dilber and Abu Mahmood tested the Indian defence. They got the first PC of the match in the 21st minute but India saved it well. Two more PCs followed but they were also foiled.

Indian strikers SV Sunil and Akashdeep also took shots at the goal without success.

Into the third quarter Pakistan make two strong attempts on goal through Ajaz Ahmad in the 34th minute and in the 38th minute Pakistan earned another PC. The drag-flick by Muhammad Irfan was well saved by Manpreet Singh.

In the final quarter India held out well. Good stick work by Mandeep Singh in the circle saw him win India's first PC in the 50th minute and it was made good by Harmanpreet Singh to give India a 2-0 lead.

But Pakistan reduced it to 2-1 with Muhammad Atiq scoring a field goal in the 52nd minute when a counter attack caught Indian defence napping.

In the remaining period, Pakistan tried, but could not find the equaliser.

SQUASH – Indian women’s journey ends in final, pick up Team silver

The Indian women who had earlier lost to Hong Kong 1-2 in the Pool clash, were beaten 0-2 in the final on Saturday. The women's squash team was going for their first gold, having won bronze and silver in the past two editions.

Sunayna Kuruvilla played first against Ho Tze-Lok and lost 8-11 and then in the second Sunayna tried to fight at 6-8 but eventually Ho took the game 11-6. In the third Sunayna was neck and neck till 5-5 the Indian even led 8-7 before it was 9-9 and then 10-10 before Sunayna took the game 12-10. In the fourth Ho raced ahead to 8-3 and wrapped it up 11-3.

In the second match saw Joshna took on Wing Chi Annie Au, who after being 3-0 made it 6-1 and 8-2 before taking the opening game 11-3.

The two were close in the second game 5-5 and then it was 9-10 against Joshna before Annie Au won the game 11-9. In the third game Annie Au was 4-1 up and then went quickly to 9-2 before closing the match at 11-5.