

Press Release

Mehuli Ghosh brooks no competition in high-voltage final

Pune, January 12: Youth Olympic Games silver medallist Mehuli Ghosh won the women's junior (under-21) 10m air rifle gold in the Khelo India Youth Games in a show of concentration and determination against jet lag. She came back from shooting in the Bundesliga in Germany only a couple of days ago and napped for half an hour in the gallery before the competition today.

The 18-year-old from West Bengal asserted her class, shooting scores of 629.4 in the qualification and following it up 252.1 that left her biggest challenger Elavenil Valarivan (Gujarat) in her wake. Mehuli was consistent throughout, the 103.0 in the fourth series of 10 shots being her lowest, in qualification. And in the final, each of her 24 shots fetched her at least 10.2 points.

It was a high-voltage battle through the day, neither shooter wanting to let her own standards drop. They were separated by only 0.6 points at the end of qualification. They returned to the final, either shooter determined to walk away with the gold. Elavenil Valarivan, who won the World Junior Championship in Sydney last year, searched for stability and conceded some ground.

"I didn't want to miss the Khelo India experience," Mehuli said. "It is a good platform since only the top 16 shooters are selected. If the quality of competition is so high in the junior and youth levels, shooters will get an idea of what to expect in the senior ranks." She took her 60 shots in qualification without shifting position. "I was happy with the rhythm and didn't want to break it."

Heena Gohei (Gujarat) and Haryana's Adarsh Singh won the other gold medals on offer today, doing well in the finals of the women's under-17 10m air rifle and men's 25m rapid fire pistol respectively.

The results (finals):

Men's junior (under-21) 25m rapid fire pistol: 1. Adarsh Singh (Haryana) 30; 2. Ayush Sangwan (Haryana) 25; 3. Harshawardhan Mahanand Yadav (Maharashtra) 19.

Women's junior (under-21) 10m air rifle: 1. Mehuli Ghosh (West Bengal) 252.1; 2. Elavenil Valarivan (Gujarat) 248.8; 3. Manini Kaushik (Rajasthan) 227.0.

Women's youth (under-17) 10m air rifle: 1. Heena Jayeshbhai Gohei (Gujarat) 247.5; 2. Jasmeen Kaur (Punjab) 246.3; Yana Rathore (Madhya Pradesh) 224.1.