

Sports Authority of India

Johnson and women's relay team give India two more gold as Men's Hockey team loses in semi-final to Malaysia

- **Indian athletics add two gold, one silver, two bronze on final day**
- **Silver for men's 4 x 400m relay team**
- **Discus thrower Seema Punia and 1,500m runner Chitra claim bronze**
- **Hockey team to play for bronze**
- **Indian medal tally is now 13 gold, 21 silver, 25 bronze**
- **Indian tally total crosses Incheon figure of 57**

Jakarta, August 30: The athletics squad provided much joy, as they picked up two gold, one silver and two bronze on Thursday, the concluding day of the athletics competition.

Jinson Johnson and the women's 4 x 400m relay team won the gold, while men's 4 x 400m relay team took silver. The two bronze medals came from Seema Punia in women's discus and Chitra Unnikrishnan in women's 1,500m.

India's total of seven gold, 10 silver and two bronze from athletics was the highest from any disciplines for India at these Games.

With this India reached 13 gold, 21 silver and 25 bronze for a total of 59 medals. It now remains to be seen whether India can get to the mark of 65, which is the highest ever achieved by India and that came at the 2010 Games in Guangzhou. The most gold by India is 15 at the 1951 Games in New Delhi.

The day however saw the defending Asian games champions, the Indian men's hockey team, suffer defeat at the hands of Malaysia in the semi-final.

The two teams were locked 2-2 in the regulation period and then Malaysia won 7-6 in the penalty shoot out tie-breaker for a total 2-2 (7-6) verdict.

The win carried Malaysia into the final for the second time. The first was also against India in 2010 in Guangzhou.

ATHLETICS –Johnson and 4 x 400m women’s relay add to gold as Indians deliver 2 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze on last day of athletics

With all the action on the 11th day of the Asian Games being in the evening section, India picked two more gold medals from athletics, as Jinson Johnson, who was pushed to silver in the 800m, finally striking gold in the men’s 1,500 metres, while the 800m champion, Manjit Singh finished fourth.

Later in the evening, the women’s 4 x 400m team of Hima Das, MR Poovamma, Saritaben Gayakwad and VK Vismaya. Interestingly, Vismaya was picked as the fourth member of the squad after a trial here in Jakarta a week earlier when the athletics team arrived here. The Indian foursome clocked 3:28.72s and won the gold medal for the fifth time in a row. India won gold medals in 2002 (Busan), 2006 (Doha), 2010 (Guangzhou) and 2014 (Incheon).

The timing however fell short of the Games record set by India in Incheon, when they times 3:28.68s. For MR Poovamma, it was the second relay gold. She had also won the 4x400m gold in 2014. Bahrain (3:30.61s) were second and Vietnam (3:33.23s) were third in the relay.

Johnson’s gold was India’s 12th gold and the women's 4 x 400m relay squad’s gold became the 13th. Johnson’s gold helped India equal the Incheon tally of 57 medals, while the relay gold took India beyond it.

Johnson, who was also favoured for the 800m, clocked 3:44.72 sec to claim the top honours ahead of Iran’s Amir Moradi, who clocked 3:45.62sec, his season’s best effort. Bahrain’s Mohammed Tiouali (3:45.88sec) beat Manjit to grab the silver, while the Indian was fourth. Manjit timed 3:46.57sec. Johnson trailed and stayed on the shoulders of his rivals and then pipped Moradi of Iran and Tiouali to take the gold.

A little before Johnson won gold, Seema Punia won bronze in women's discus throw while Chitra Unnikrishnan took bronze in the women's 1500m race.

The defending Asian Games champion in women’s discus Seema Punia threw the disc to a best distance of 62.26m and it sufficed for a bronze, despite the throw

being more than a metre ahead of her Incheon effort of 61.03m. Seema also has three silvers and one bronze from four Commonwealth Games.

China finished first and second with Chen Yang (65.12m) and Feng Bin (64.25m) taking the gold and silver.

Bahrain's Ethiopian imports, Kalkidan Befkadu (4:07.88s) and Tigist Belay (4:09.12s) took the gold and silver in women's 1,500m and behind them was Chitra finishing third for a bronze in 4:12.56s.

The Indian men's 4 x 400m relay team finished second to the favoured Qatari team. The Indians comprising PK Muhammad, Dharun Ayyaswamy, Muhammad Anas and Rajiv Arokia clocked 3:01.85, while Qataris timed 3:00.56s. Japan were third in 3:01.94s.

HOCKEY – Men's hockey team loses in semi-finals; will play for bronze

India suffered a 6-7 loss in the sudden death penalty shoot-out after being tied 2-2 against Malaysia in the semi-finals of the Asian Games hockey competition on Thursday. Coming into the semi-final after scoring a record 76 goals in five league matches, India allowed Malaysia to equalize with 111 seconds left on the clock.

India came into the match with a 10-1 record against Malaysia in the Asian Games and the last time India lost to Malaysia at the Asiad was in 2010. That loss, too, came after the teams were tied in regulation period and Malaysia won in extra time at a final score of 4-3. India ended with a bronze at those Games.

On Thursday, two goalless halves which saw plenty of penalty corners being wasted by both sides was followed by a goal from India's Harmanpreet Singh, who converted India's sixth penalty corner into a goal in the 33rd minute.

Six minutes later Faizal Saari, one of Malaysia's stars from the 2010 Games, scored the equalizer.

But within 53 seconds of the equalizer India once again forged ahead through Varun Kumar, who scored following a penalty corner taken by Harmanpreet.

India held that 2-1 lead till late into the final quarter, despite being reduced to nine players with 12 minutes on the clock. But the two players were brought back into the game well in time for the finish.

With one minute and 51 seconds left on the clock, Malaysia got their seventh penalty corner of the day and off that Muhammed Razie Rahim, got the equalizer sending the match into penalty shoot-out.

Interestingly, it was the same Razie Rahim, who had got Malaysia the winner in the 2010 semis in extra time.

It was a tough blow for Indians after their massive wins in the matches in the league stage, when they scored 76 goals in five game, including three wins by 17 goals or more.

In the first set of five penalty shots each, India and Malaysia were 2-2. As the tense shoot-out began, Manpreet missed the first attempt while Muhammed Firhan Ashari scored to put Malaysia 1-0 up, but Akashdeep got that back for 1-1. Then Tajuddin and Faizal Saari missed for Malaysia, while Dilpreet Singh and SV Sunil missed on the Indian side and the two sides were still alevel.

Off the fifth shot of the first set of shots, Harmanpreet scored to put India 2-1 up but Mohammed Fitri Saari, brother of Faizal Saari once again pulled Malaysia to level scores at 2-2 and a total of 4-4.

Then started the sudden death, Muhammed Firhan Ashari put Malaysia 3-2 up only to see Harmanpreet come back and make it 3-3. Mohammed Fitri Saari scored again for 4-3 and Akashdeep in a 'can't miss' situation made it 4-4. Once again Muhammad Azuan Hassan made it 5-4, before Manpreet leveled again at 5-5.

Faizal Saari scored once more before Dilpreet Singh made it 6-6. Then it was veteran Tajuddin who scored yet again to make it 7-6 and Malaysians had scored fifth in a row. Finally SV Sunil, who had missed once earlier went on to miss a second time which meant defending champions India were out.

India will now meet the losers of Pakistan versus Japan match for the bronze medal.

TABLE TENNIS - Sharath Kamal enters round of 16

Sharath Kamal entered the Round of 16 with an 11-4, 11-8, 11-7, 11-5 win over Pakistan's 52-year-old Muhammad Asim Qureshi. It took the Indian just 18 minutes to achieve victory.

The Indian paddler won the first game 11-4, but the second one required some effort before he won it 11-8. Sharath finished the match 11-7, 11-5 in next two games for a 4-0 win.