



India's Men and Women shuttlers win Gold at South Asian Games 2016

Shillong | Monday, 2016



Shillong: India's Badminton Team on Monday clinched Gold in the Men and Women's Team Championship of the 12th South Asian Games at the North Eastern Hill University, Sports Authority of India, Special Area Games, here on Monday.

The battle at the Badminton arena was mainly between India and Sri Lanka. The Indian shuttlers were in an aggressive mode, leaving no room for their rivals to make their presence felt.

Kidambi Srikanth went up against Sri Lanka's Buwanaka Goonathileka who was the first to reach 11 points and threatened to put the Indian to the test. However, that was not to be. Srikanth combined his smashes well with some net dribbles and ensured that the first game ended 21-14 in his favour. Having squandered his best opportunity to take a lead in the first game, Goonathileka gave in, in the second, going down by the same margin.

Sachin Dias, who had impressed one and all with his show against Pakistan's Murad Aliq on Sunday, was no match for India's H.S. Prannoy, who tamed the Sri Lankan 21-13, 21-16 to take the hosts 2-0 up.

The doubles combination of Manu Attri and Sumeeth Reddy then made light work of the Lankan duo of Buwanaka Goonathileka and Sachin Dias to give India the Gold.

Earlier in the day, India went past Pakistan without much fuss in the Men's Semi-finals, beating them 3-0. A dogged Md Irfan matched Srikanth 19-19 in the first game before the Indian won 21-19. As has been the order of the day throughout the competition, the rivals could not withstand the Indian onslaught in the second set which was sealed 21-15 by Srikanth.

For Ajay Jayaram, the tie against Murad Aliq was devoid of any real challenge as the Indian dominated 21-11, 21-16. The duo of Manu and Sumeeth then got the better of the Pakistan pair of Kashif Sulhari and Rizwan Azam 21-9, 21-18 in just 25 minutes.

Similarly, the flawless P.V. Sindhu gave India the perfect start in the Women's section with a 21-7, 21-5 win over Sri Lanka's Kavindi Ishadika Sirimannage. However, it was the match between India's Ruthvika Shivani and Sri Lanka's Thilini Pramodika that brought the home crowd to their feet.

Shivani, who made her debut in the South Asian Games this year, looked like dropping a game as she was trailing 17-20 at one point. However, Shivani came back strongly to take the game 23-21. There was no looking back from there as she clinched the next game 21-13.

The doubles pair of Sindhu and Ashwini Ponnappa then completed the formalities by beating the Lankan duo of Achini Rathnasiri and Upuli Samathika 21-13, 21-13.

The Indian Women's shuttlers also won easily against Bangladesh with Sindhu wrapping up the match against Alina in merely 15 minutes. Shivani took a couple of minutes more to beat Dulaly 21-5, 21-6. Sindhu and Ponnappa then romped home 21-11, 21-12 against Brishty and Dulaly.

While Bangladesh and Pakistan bagged Bronze in the Men's category, Nepal and Bangladesh claimed the Bronze medal in the Women's category.

The Results (Badminton):

Men's Final: India bt Sri Lanka 3-0 (K. Srikanth bt Buwanaka Goonathileka 21-14, 21-14; H.S. Prannoy bt Sachin Dias 21-13, 21-16; Manu Attri & Sumeeth Reddy bt Goonathileka & Dias 21-12, 21-11).

Men's Semifinals: India bt Pakistan 3-0; Sri Lanka bt Bangladesh 3-0.

Women's Final: India bt Sri Lanka 3-0 (P.V. Sindhu bt Kavindi Ishadika Sirimannage 21-7, 21-5; Ruthvika Shivani bt Thilini Pramodika 23-21, 21-13; Ashwini Ponappa & P.V. Sindhu bt Achini Rathnasiri & Upuli Samathika 21-13, 21-13).

Women's Semifinals: Sri Lanka bt Nepal 3-0; India bt Bangladesh 3-0.
