

Shooting stars, women's cricket team make India proud on Day 2 of Asiad

Uthra Ganesan

HANGZHOU

Gold on debut and youth to the fore were the main themes for India at the Asian Games here on Monday. While the women's cricket team finished on top, the young guns of Indian shooting combined for a new world record in the 10m air rifle team competition, on the second day of the Games.

Aged 22, 19, and 20 respectively, the trio of Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Rudranksh Patil and Divyansh Singh Panwar showed that the next generation of Indian shooters was ready for the big stage, upsetting favourite and host China to score a total



Golden glow: Richa Ghosh, Kanika Ahuja and Smriti Mandhana are all smiles after Team India's triumph on Monday. PTI

of 1893.7 points to give India its first gold here.

The first two then ended up in a shoot-off for the bronze medal in the individual event. Panwar was unlucky to lose out on countbacks. In 25m rapid fire pistol, the team of An-

ish Bhanwala, Adarsh Singh and Vijayveer Sidhu finished third but Vijayveer slipped to fourth in the individual event.

The women's cricket team ensured that a low total would be no obstacle to its crowning glory, defeat-

ing Sri Lanka by 19 runs in the final with Titas Sadhu, 18, making a mark.

The Indian rowers ended their campaign with two bronze as India finished the day with a satisfactory haul of two gold and three bronze to take its medal tally to 11, placing it sixth on the table.

In the men's four event, Ashish, Punit Kumar, Bhim Singh and Jaswinder Singh were pushed to the third spot by China by 0.78 seconds. Satnam Singh, Parminder Singh, Sukhmeet and Jakar Khan brought India another medal by finishing third in quadruple sculls.

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10m air rifle team makes it a golden day for India

Divyansh, Aishwary Pratap and Rudranksh not only win India its maiden yellow metal in the 19th edition, but also double the joy by setting a new World record bettering China's mark

ASIAN GAMES

Uthra Ganesan
HANGZHOU

An impish smile firmly in place, a beaming Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar was nothing like what he had seemed a few minutes before - a picture of concentration, blocking out everything in the world except himself, his rifle and the target 10m away. Having won bronze in his maiden Asian Games outing, the 22-year-old with two medals on a day was clearly enjoying the spotlight.

That spotlight had been firmly on the men and women with the guns to kick-start India's medal run at the Asian Games. While the women opened the medal tally with a silver in the 10m air rifle team, the men went a step further, not just getting India's maiden gold but doing it in style, with a new World Record to boot. That the record they broke had been held by host China made it sweeter.

In the individual qualification round, the trio shot a total of 1893.7, 0.4 points more than the previous world record score set by China last month in the Baku World Championship.

"It feels really good. The team gold is extra special because it came here and we actually did not expect it to be one. You can see how vocally the crowds



Bull's eye: Divyansh, Aishwary Pratap and Rudranksh combined to make it a memorable finish for India in the 10m air rifle team event. **PH**

here cheer for their athletes, which is understandable but it makes the win even more special. Now that we have done it as a team, we will try to do it individually also next time," said Aishwary Pratap after winning his individual bronze to go with the gold.

For someone who openly professes his preference for the 50m 3-Position, to outgun favourites Ru-

dranksh Patil and Divyansh Parwar was a happy moment. "I was initially trailing a bit, then I took lead and then I shot a 10.1 to equal scores with Rudranksh to get into a shoot-off. That shot was difficult because there were a lot of things going on in my mind. The good thing was at least a medal was assured for India.

In 25m rapid fire pistol,

however, the Indian trio of Vijayveer Sidhu, Anish Bhanwala and Adarsh Singh had to settle for a bronze in the team event, tying with Indonesia on 1718 points but getting on the podium by virtue of 45x to Indonesia's 37x (closest to the middle).

China took gold with a World record total of 1765 points, followed by South Korea with 1734 points.

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With five medals, the Indian rowers make a splash

Uthra Ganesan
HANGZHOU

China may not be a favourite for Indian sports in general but for the rowers, it has been a happy hunting ground. With five medals in the 19th Asian Games here which equalled their previous best-ever performance, the Indians are now hoping for bigger success.

India finished with two silvers and three bronze in rowing to equal its 2010 tally at Guangzhou, adding two bronze on Monday in the men's Four and Quadruple Sculls. And while Balraj Panwar came agonisingly close before falling short to finish fourth in the Single Sculls, it was heartening for someone who was not even considered for the Games before being added as a late entry.

"My coaches and the federation pushed a lot to get my event included. The IOA had initially not considered single sculls but coaches Bajrang (Lal Takhar) and Ismail sir insisted



On the podium: Quadruple sculls bronze medallists Satnam Singh, Parminder Singh, Jakar Khan and Sukhmeet Singh of India. AFP

I was doing well in my time trials during training. I am happy I gave everything I had out there to get a personal best timing," Panwar told *The Hindu*.

It was heartbreak for the Indian quartet of Ashish, Punit Kumar, Bhim Singh and Jaswinder Singh as they were nudged out of the second spot by China by 0.78s in the men's Four event.

"We had tried to beat the Chinese from the start and it was all going accord-

ing to plan but a mistake in the last 20 metres cost us a silver. There was a cross-wind which forced us to go off course and one of our oars got stuck in the buoy. We lost those crucial micro-seconds and our silver turning to bronze," Punit admitted.

With vocal crowd support, the Chinese nipped ahead while Uzbekistan won a comfortable gold. That it was one of only two silvers won by the Chinese – along with 11 golds –



Making a mark: Ashish, Punit, Bheem and Jaswinder Singh, the bronze winners in the Men's Four. PTI

shows the dominance of the host in the water and challenging them was a morale-booster.

"This will probably hurt me for a long time. Hopefully, the coming generations will take strength from this and realise that we have the potential to defeat China in future competitions," Punit hoped.

The Quadruple Sculls added another bronze as the rowers recovered from a disappointing finish of sixth the day before in the

Double Sculls with both Satnam Singh and Parminder Singh admitting it had been a testing night before.

"I have taken part in World Cups before, I even have a medal at the 2022 Asian Championships. But the environment here, the pride I felt was tremendous. Every minute felt like an hour last night. But we gave everything we had today to the point that we don't have anything left in us now," Parminder said.

"We were in the clear

Medals Tally

Country	G	S	B	T
China	39	21	9	69
S. Korea	10	10	13	33
Japan	5	14	12	31
Uzbekistan	4	4	6	14
Hong Kong	3	4	7	14
India	2	3	6	11
Chinese Taipei	2	1	3	6
Indonesia	1	1	4	6
Thailand	1	0	2	3
Macao	1	0	1	2
Tajikistan	1	0	1	2

for a silver yesterday but when I turned to my side, I felt a twist in my neck and my body just shut down. Only we know how worried we were through the night.

"But the crew today had faith in me. We spoke about trying a different combination but they all wanted me to race today and I am glad I could keep their faith," an exhausted Satnam added.

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Titas breathes fire as the Women In Blue strike gold



Moment to cherish: The Indian women cricketers are ecstatic after finishing on top. **PN**

Aashin Prasad
HANGZHOU

Teen pacer Titas Sadhu is quickly turning out to be the player for big occasions. In January, she set the tone by jolting England's top-order in India's win in the U-19 World Cup. Seven months on, the speedster started in another final as the Women In Blue claimed a maiden Asian Games gold with a 19-run win over Sri Lanka.

Defending a modest 117 at the Pingfeng Campus Cricket Field on Monday, Titas' pace was too hot to handle for the Sri Lankans. After Deepti Sharma gave away 12 runs in her opening over, Harmanpreet Kaur, returning after the ban, turned to Titas (who is four days shy of her 19th birthday) who obliged her captain with a wicket of the first ball.

Anushka Sanjeevani miscued a shot to mid-off and two balls later, Titas went through Vishmi Gunaratne's defence to disturb



Titas. **ANI**

her stumps.

In her second over, the experienced Chamari Athapaththu fell looking to take on the youngster as Titas' first spell read 3-1-2-3 before she finished with 4-1-6-3.

After Titas' hostile spell, Sri Lanka rebuilt with Hasini Perera and Nilakshi de Silva by taking on the Indian spinners.

Nilakshi and Oshadi Ranasinghe got their side close to the target as Sri Lanka needed 43 off 30 balls before Harmanpreet brought on Titas, who cleaned up Nilakshi with a yorker. The spinners then came on to ensure victory.

Earlier in the afternoon, Sri Lanka choked India by using spin. After a restrained start, Shafali Verma stepped out to left-arm orthodox Sugandika Kumari only to be stumped.

Jemimah Rodrigues, who has been the top batter in the Games with 109 runs, and Smriti Mandhana came together to add 73 runs in 67 balls for the second wicket. Jemimah (42 off 40 balls) used her feet well, while Smriti, who top-scored with a 45-ball 46, was severe on anything short or in the slot.

India scored just 14 runs off the final 21 balls while losing four wickets. In the end, Jemimah's contribution proved good enough as India defended successfully.

The scores: India 116/7 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 46, Jemimah Rodrigues 42, Udesika Prabodhani 2/16, Sugandika Kumari 2/30, Inoka Ranawoora 2/21) bt Sri Lanka 97/8 in 20 overs (Hasini Perera 25, Titas Sadhu 3/6, Rajeshwari Gayakwad 2/20). **Toss:** India.

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Over 40% of electric vehicles sold in the country this year were made in Tamil Nadu

Sangeetha Kandavel
CHENNAI

Of the 10 lakh electric vehicles (EVs) sold in India this year, over four lakh were manufactured in Tamil Nadu.

According to data from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' Vahan dashboard, 10,44,600 EVs were registered with RTOs till September 20. Data shared by Guidance Tamil Nadu, the nodal agency instrumental in bringing investments into the State, revealed that out of the one million EVs sold in India, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) having a manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu contributed more than 4,10,000 (0.41 million) units - over 40%.

Ola Electric has sold 1,75,608 units from its manufacturing plant in Krishnagiri. TVS Motor, which also has a plant in Krishnagiri, has sold 1,12,949 units. By 2030, Tamil Nadu aims to manufacture 30% of all EVs sold in India and contribute substantially to exports, according to Guidance Tamil Nadu.

Regarded as the automobile capital of the country, Tamil Nadu is now aiming to carve a niche in the EV sector. In the light of the EV boom, the State government rolled out an Electric Vehicles Policy in 2023. It has been working

EV powerhouse

A look at Tamil Nadu's contribution to the electric vehicles sector



OEM*	Manufacturing location	Units sold
Ola Electric	Krishnagiri	1,75,608
TVS Motor	Krishnagiri	1,12,949
Ather Energy	Krishnagiri	77,764
Ampere Vehicles (Greaves Electric)	Ranipet	41,757
BYD India	Kancheepuram	1,725
Stellantis (PCA Automobiles)	Tiruvallur	1,533
E-Royce Motors	Coimbatore	1,242
Hyundai Motor India	Kancheepuram	1,023
Reep Motors	Chengalpattu	810
TI Clean Mobility	Tiruvallur	391
Total		4,14,802

* OEM: Original Equipment Manufacturer

on giving a big push to the EV ecosystem, including the manufacturing of batteries, charging infrastructure and other components.

Six cities identified

Six cities - Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Salem and Chennai - have been identified as potential EV hubs. Some of the natural advantages that aid Tamil Nadu's EV sector

are the availability of a highly competent, trained workforce, an excellent network and supply chain of ancillary suppliers, a vibrant auto and auto component manufacturing ecosystem, and the State's infrastructure and logistics support systems.

Around ₹50,000 crore is expected to be invested in EV manufacturing by 2025, resulting in the creation of 1.5 lakh jobs.

Jaishankar, Guterres discuss reform of global financial institutions, sustainability

After meeting with UN Secretary-General, Minister appreciates his strong commitment to reforming international financial institutions; he also meets UNGA chief Dennis Francis

Sriram Lakshman
UNITED NATIONS

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres held bilateral talks on Monday, and discussed the sustainability agenda and the reform of international financial institutions, as per Mr. Jaishankar. The Minister met with Mr. Guterres at the UN's headquarters on the eve of the Minister's address to the 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

"Discussed how India's G20 Presidency has contributed to strengthening UN's sustainable development agenda," Mr. Jaishankar wrote on X (formerly, Twitter).

"We have coordinated closely in this regard over the last year. Appreciate UNSG's strong commitment to reforming International Financial Institutions," he added, referring



Key meeting: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at the UN Headquarters on Monday. X/@DRS.JAISHANKAR

to the reform of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

On the reform agenda is greater lending capacity for the World Bank and more board-based representation for countries on the boards of these institutions. Mr. Guterres has been a vocal critic of the performance of these institutions.

The Minister also met with UNGA President Dennis Francis, with whom he

said he had discussed India's G-20 presidency, as well as the reform of multilateralism "and giving the Global South its due on crucial issues of our times". The government has sought to position India as the advocate of the Global South and had organised a number of similarly themed events on the fringes of the UNGA session in New York.

"Congratulated India's successful #G20 Chairman-

ship, especially on India's unwavering advocacy in support of the Global South," Mr. Francis said.

Mr. Jaishankar also held talks with Madagascar Foreign Minister Yvette Sylla. "Discussed development partnership, millets and rice production, digital delivery and defense cooperation," he said on X.

Mr. Jaishankar will address the General Assembly on Tuesday morning on behalf of the government.

Eight institutes give an array of reasons for Joshimath sinking

Seismic activities, construction loopholes, population pressure, poor drainage system are among the factors cited; the reports were made public only after the Uttarakhand High Court last week questioned the State for not disclosing them

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Separate studies conducted by eight premier institutions of India to know the cause of land subsidence in Joshimath town of Uttarakhand attributed seismic activities, construction loopholes, population pressure, poor drainage system and others as the 'likely' reason for the sinking of the Himalayan town.

With every study conducted with a different approach, these reports reaffirmed the sensitivity of the area but nothing concrete has come out on what exactly went wrong in January, experts say.

The Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee, the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS), the Geological Survey of India (GSI), the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) were given the mandate to identify the causes of land



Tumbled down: Residential areas affected by land subsidence in Joshimath on January 12. PTI

subsidence by the government. The reports of these institutions were submitted earlier this year, but they were made public after the Uttarakhand High Court last week questioned the State for hiding them.

CBRI report

In its report, the CBRI stated that Joshimath town has 44%, 42%, 14% of masonry, RCC and other (traditional, hybrid) construction typologies, respectively, among which 99% are non-engineered. It means they are not in compliance with the National Building Code of India, 2016.

"Joshimath town is situated on Vaikrita groups of rocks overlain by morainic

deposits which are composed of irregular boulders and clay of varying thicknesses. Such deposits are less cohesive and susceptible to slow subsidence and landslide subsidence," the CBRI said. There is a history of creeping and occasional subsidence in the region and what happened in December 2022-January 2023 was another such event, it said.

The Roorkee-based NIH, in its report, said that maps of subsidence infer that land subsidence and subsurface water in Joshimath might have some connections.

"The isotopic and water quality signature of the

samples taken from NTPC sites differs from the JP site as well as drains and springs in the nearby area of Joshimath. The bacteriological analysis also suggested that the gush water is fresh water and not contaminated by the local drains," the report suggested giving a clean chit to the NTPC whose construction activities were being dubbed as one of the biggest reason for land subsidence.

The institution hence recommended the safe disposal of the water coming from the upper reaches and waste disposal as the top priority.

The WIHG mentioned earthquakes as a reason for slow and gradual land subsidence.

"The main reason for the subsidence appears to be internal erosion caused by the subsurface drainage, which may be due to infiltration of rainwater/melting of ice/wastewater discharge from household and hotels. Though subsidence is continuous phenomenon, it can be minimised by controlling infiltration of water, which helps in minimising the internal erosion," the report

of the IIT said.

After an analysis by the Small Baseline Subset Interferometry SAR Technique, the ISRO stated that the subsidence in the Joshimath region may be due to toe-cutting phenomenon, slope instability as a result of seepage of local drainage water in the soil, terrain and edaphic characteristics, loose and unconsolidated moraine materials of the slope (due to old landslide) and flash flood events in and around the area in the recent past. This has resulted in development of cracks in the ground as well as houses in Joshimath town.

Mallika Bhanot, an environment activist, said that in 2012 after the Ukhimath disaster, there was a clear recommendation by the State Disaster Management Department to stop blasting in the vicinity of Joshimath. The report had asked to regulate infrastructure development.

Geologist Navin Juyal termed the reports of the eight institutions 'old wine in a new bottle'. "These reports clearly said all that had been said 46 years ago in the M.C. Mishra Committee report," he said.

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ISRO tests engine for Gaganyaan mission

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully completed the CE20 E13 engine hot test for Gaganyaan qualification and 22-tonne thrust qualification.

The engine was tested at the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri on September 22.

The CE20 engine is a vital component, serving as the powerhouse of the Cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS) responsible for propelling the upper stage (C25) of the LVM3 vehicle. It has demonstrated its capability by successfully operating at a thrust level of 19 tonnes in six successive LVM3 missions and two commercial OneWeb missions.

"To enhance the payload capacity of the LVM3 vehicle, ISRO is upgrading the CE20 engine. The upper cryogenic stage is being transformed into the C32 stage with increased propellant loading capacity, and the engine is being modified to operate at a higher thrust level of 22 tonnes," the space agency said. The Test Vehicle D-1/ Crew Escape System mission of Gaganyaan is likely to be conducted in October.



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