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SAG Pakistan, India share judo golds at South Asian Games on final day

Pakistan and India evenly shared the four golds on offer on the final day of the judo competition at the 12th South Asian Games 2016 here today.

The four heaviest weight categories in men's and women's judo were held on what is also the final day of the 12th SAG in the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Sports Hall.

For India, Pooja (women's under-70kg) and Avtar Singh (men's U-90kg) bagged gold, while Fouzia Mumtaz (women's U-78kg) and Hussain Shah (men's U-100kg) took first place for Pakistan.

Pooja, who received a bye into the semifinal round, first took down WAPRL Jayaratne of Sri Lanka before beating Beenish Khan of Pakistan in the final bout. Jayaratne and Ganga Chaudhary (Nepal), who lost to Beenish in the last-four, were awarded bronze.

There were only four contestants in the women's U-78kg category, so the event was held in a round-robin format. There was little to separate Fouzia from India's silver medal winner Aruna, with the former collecting a total score of 210 to Aruna's 200. The two had a exciting fight, with supporters of both sides cheering them on. It was a close contest, in which Fouzia flipped her opponent onto her back for a waza-ari and the score ended 10-0, which ultimately proved crucial in getting the Pakistani judoka the gold. WGLD Jayawardana (Sri Lanka) and Punam Shrestha (Nepal) were awarded bronze.

Switching over to the men's events and Avtar Singh had little trouble progressing towards his gold medal, with easy victories over Sanjay Maharjan (Nepal), Md Jahangir Alam (Bangladesh) and then Mohammad Kakar (Afghanistan) in the final, which only lasted 49 seconds. GWKKD Gihan (Sri Lanka) and M Afzal Bashir (Pakistan) took bronze.

In the last final of the tournament, Hussain Shah took the gold for Pakistan in the U-100kg men's final in less than 90 seconds over his Indian opponent Shubham Kumar. Shiva Bahadur Baram (Nepal) and M Tawfiq Bakhshi (Afghanistan) were awarded bronze.

The hosts thus came away with nine gold medals in total, along with three silver. Pakistan's two golds today were their only top finishes in the discipline, but they also leave with two silver medals and eight bronze.

Nepal was the only other country to come away with a gold, won by Phupu Lhamu Khatri in the women's U-63kg category yesterday. Nepal also claimed two silver and six bronze medals. Among the other countries, Afghanistan took four silver and two bronze, while Sri Lanka took one silver and six bronze. Bangladesh finished with two bronze, while Bhutan, who sent a very young team comprising only four members, ended without any medals.

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