

Sport



WE'VE WON IT: The Nepalese booters relishing the moment after beating India 4-3 in an exciting tie-breaker of the Sixth SAF Games football final at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Nepal's gold comes at long last

Sports Reporter

Nepal beat favourites India in a marathon finale to relive a golden sensation as the champions of the first SAF Games beat two-time winners India in tie-breaker at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. After a 2-2 deadlock in the 120 minutes of play including 30 minutes of extra time, Basant Gurung perhaps the most decisive factor in Nepal's success, coolly converted the spot-kick during the sudden death to add to the delirium of his tired teammates.

The harder, tougher footballers whose experience of playing in rarified oxygen as it is the case with all denizens of Lankan booters book the bronze

Shri Lanka received the bronze medal in the Sixth SAF Games football tournament when they beat a relatively weaker Maldives 3-1 in the third place play-off at the Mirpur National Stadium yesterday afternoon.

Shri Lanka led the first half 1-0, reports BSS. Playing with confidence, the Lankans took the lead in the 34th minute through a penalty taken by Anton Silva (1-0).

In the second-half CN Stenwall scored in the 54th minute off a cross from Anton Silva to increase the margin (2-0).

But ceaseless efforts of the Maldivians helped them reduce the margin in the 73rd minute when Ismail Anil's hard drive beat the Lankan goalie.

Three minutes before the final whistle Shri Lanka's CN Stenwall scored his second goal to take his country 3-1 up.

In the last Games at Colombo, the Maldives had won silver.

monticolous regions like, Nepal, summoned all their inherent resilience and fighting qualities to come back twice from behind. As they did against hosts Bangladesh on December 22, taking the highly fancied local outfit by surprise with a compact defence and sudden forays that culminated in a snap goal by Basant Gurung, Nepal yesterday adopted the same policy preferring to play within themselves.

India made the most of the spaces left by their counterparts in the midfield to keep Nepal pushing during almost the entire first half.

The champions of the second and third SAF Games India, however, failed to open the determined Nepalese defence despite winning four corners in the first 30 minutes of the match.

India, for whom Dhaka symbolised a pilgrimage since their first soccer gold of the Games came in 1985, the year Dhaka became hosts for the first time, perhaps, had a hunch of it and decided to come up with a *ruse contra ruse*.

Unable to enter the heart of the Nepalese defence, the Indians, coached by Czech Jerrí Páček, took recourse to shooting and got result in their first serious attempt.

Tajinder Kumar, the crafty attacking medio who thrives on the right side but possesses a lethal left foot that can unleash powerful, surprising shots, had a ball relayed to him from a flag kick and the sharp featured life blood of the Indian attack let fly a powerful right footer in the 25th minute from about 25 metres that swerved wickedly to enter the net by grazing the post, much to the horror of Upendra Maan Singh, the Nepalese custodian (1-0).

After being cornered for most of the first half that saw Nepal twice coming close to find the equaliser on sporadic bursts, the eventual champions came strongly.

Umesh Pradhan, the live wire of Nepalese attack, helped his side turn a significant corner when 20 minutes into the second half he managed a beely shot from a goalmouth melee out of an avoidable corner and Indian custodian Heman Dora had no answer to it (1-1).

The contest hotted up and Indians merced a sigh of relief when the mercurial Vijayan, the star of the Indian team who barring few flashes of vaunted class had an otherwise very ordinary meet, gobbled up Tajinder's cake in the 36th minute.

Accelerating down the right in a sudden surge, Tajinder took a powerful angled half-drive, half-cross shot that slipped out of Upen's clasp, hit the cross piece and came to a following Vijayan, who made no mistake in nodding the ball into an empty net from close (2-1).

Nepal revved themselves up for the decisive final assault and five minutes before the final whistle got a new lease of life. A free-kick was earned some 20 metres away from the Indian goal and the workman like Mani Shah swung the ball in spectacularly with a left footer and a befoiled Heman Dora saw the ball enter the net by the corner of the angle (2-2).

In extra time, India got an excellent scoring chance but a racing Bhupinder Thakur was robbed off the ball by Devnarayan Chowdhury's desperate sliding tackle.

In the tie-breaker, Rajesh Manandar, Rajr Sakya and Milan Hada scored for Nepal while Sathyan Vatta, Subir

Ghose and Bhupinder Thakur netted for India in their first five attempts.

Carlton Chamman of India sent the spot kick wide while Tajinder attempted was nicely saved by Nepalese custodian.

Indian goalie Heman Dora foiled the attempts of Devnarayan and Rajesh Thapa of Nepal.

In the sudden death session, Basanta Gurung of Nepal scored the match winner after Aqueel Ansari, the promising Indian booter, sent the ball straight to Upendra Mansingh, the Nepalese custodian.

Tajinder Kumar of India and Deepak Amatya of Nepal were cautioned with yellow card for rough charging.

Pak men, Indian girls triumph in volleyball

Sports Reporter

Pakistan and India won the men's and women's titles in the sixth SAF Games volleyball competition, which concluded yesterday at the Mirpur indoor stadium.

The Pakistani men downed the Indian spikers 15-1, 14-16, 15-10 and 15-10 in the last robin league match to finish first while the fancied Indian eves had a 15-3, 12-15, 15-10, 15-6 win over Sri Lanka, whom they had beaten in the first match on Thursday.

Bangladesh won the bronze for being the only other side in the women's event while Sri Lanka finished third in the men's group.

Curtain comes down this afternoon

Sports Reporter

The curtain is set to come down on the eight-day long Sixth SAF Games, the sporting extravaganza of the seven SAARC member nations, at a gala closing ceremony scheduled to begin at the Dhaka Stadium at 2:40 this afternoon.

The programme list for the elaborately planned finishing flourish includes 23 events or chapters, starting with fanfare at 2:40 pm and ending with a 60-lakh Taka fireworks at 18.15 pm.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will be the guest of honour and will formally declare the Games, participated by nearly a thousand athletes and team officials from all the seven South Asian nations, closed.

The closing ceremony will include marchpast by the participating contingents and Adamya, the Games mascot in the form of a tiger cub, formal handing over of the Games flag and torch by the Dhaka City Mayor to the Mayor of Madras, venue for the next biennial gathering two years from now, address by the PM, retreat reveille, tribal dances, *bratachari* and *lathikhela*, SAF Games song and the closing song, puppet show, farewell, band display, a song of the seven countries, and finally a grand display of fireworks.

Tickets for the show are priced at Taka 50 for the galleries. From all indications, the Dhaka Stadium should have a sell-out crowd for this rare spectacle.

Zahiruddin made chief patron of SATF

A M Zahiruddin Khan, Minister for Industries and president of Bangladesh Tennis Federation has been elected the chief patron of the South Asian Tennis Federation (SATF), a BTF press release said here yesterday, reports BSS.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the officials of the National Tennis Associations of South Asian countries here with BTF president A M Zahiruddin Khan in the chair.

The press release said, that the meeting made Khan SATF president, but he relinquished the position in favour of president of the Indian Tennis Association R K Khanna who has been elected for a two-year term.

Kh Saeed Hai of Pakistan, D L Seneviratne of Sri Lanka and Prof Rashiduddin Ahmed of Bangladesh were made vice presidents while Faizur Rahman Chaudhury of Bangladesh a secretary general.

The other members of the committee are: Join secretaries: Gihan Dalpethadu (Sri Lanka) and Syed Wahid (Bangladesh).

Treasurer: Manik Goswami (India).

Members: Abdul Rasheed (Maldives), Moazzem Hossain, Khan (Bangladesh) and general secretaries of Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Indian, Pak shooters pick up 2 golds each on last day

Sports Reporter



Pushpa Mali, the Shri Lankan shooter, proudly displays her collection of three gold medals and two silvers. — Star photo

Hoists Bangladesh could only bag a silver as India and Pakistan collected two golds each on the concluding day of the Sixth SAF Games shooting competition. Yesterday at the Bangladesh

team comprising Harinder Singh, Amarinder Singh and Inderjit Singh was on target 323 times.

Pakistan took the bronze with Khurram Inam, Nasiruddin and Javed Omar managing 270.

Earlier Harinder won the gold in the individual event for his 135 hits out of a total of 150.

The silver and bronze medals also went to Indians. Amarinder was on target 125 times to claim the silver while Inderjit collected the bronze for his effort of 125 hits.

Pakistan set a new record in the men's Free Pistol 60 shots team event. Their shooting trio totalled 1587 to take the gold.

Three Pakistanis featured in medal-winning positions in the individual event also.

Inamullah Khan scored 538 to take the gold. Sajid Iqbal secured 537 to settle for the silver while Mohammad Abbas had to be content with the bronze for his effort of 512.

India, however, claimed the silver in the team event. T K Sikdar, Ashok Pandit and Jaspal Rana, scored 531, 528 and 519 respectively to raise a team total of 1578.

The Shri Lankan trio of Susanta Walgama, Ashita Liyanage and C M Chandana was left with the bronze, chipping in with 529, 516 and 506 respectively in a total of 1,554.

The Sixth SAF Games shooting competition, which began on December 21, the second day of the eight-day seven-nation meet, featured 10 events.

MEDALS TABLE

Following is the final medal tally of the Sixth SAF Games shooting:

	G	S	B	T
Bangladesh	7	6	4	17
India	6	8	8	22
Sri Lanka	5	4	5	14
Pakistan	2	2	3	07

For Pakistan, not a bad Games

By S A Bokhari

After the conclusion of competitions in the Sixth SAF Games here yesterday, the Pakistani contingent must be quite satisfied for winning 20 golds, 21 silvers and 58 bronzes in 10 disciplines.

Once again they finished behind India and Sri Lanka. However, their overall performance was not good because they failed to maintain the Colombo showing where they bagged eight golds. Pakistan has always figured quite satisfactorily in this sport, the only game in which the country has won most medals among the 30 disciplines it competes in throughout the world. For this sterling performance coaches Jan Mohammad Baluch and Abid Islam should be congratulated.

In wrestling Pakistan should have won at least six golds but they won only four golds, six silvers. In the past Pakistani grapplers garnered more medals than their arch-rivals India but here the Indians swept the medals table.

In volleyball Pakistan exacted sweet revenge from India, winning the gold yesterday. They beat India by three sets to one in the final. Secretary of the Pakistan Volleyball Federation Abdul Khaliq Khan, who specially flew in from Lahore to witness the championship, was at hand to savour the success.

In tennis, table tennis and shooting Pakistan failed to achieve the required South Asian standards and fared poorly but they should not be blamed because there is not a single international standard indoor stadium in the country except the one in Islamabad where only few players reside. In shooting, however, Pakistan performed rather well, winning two golds.

For the first time Pakistan won the kabaddi gold defeating

gave a top class performance winning nine golds, two silvers and one bronze in twelve weight categories. This was better than the Colombo showing where they bagged eight golds. Pakistan has always figured quite satisfactorily in this sport, the only game in which the country has won most medals among the 30 disciplines it competes in throughout the world. For this sterling performance coaches Jan Mohammad Baluch and Abid Islam should be congratulated.

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India in the third league match Saturday quite convincingly.

The worst performances were by the Pakistani footballers and track and field athletes. In football Pakistan was on the golden hat-trick but they played badly against Sri Lanka on the opening day and lost the match and drew 2-2 with India, a record which put them out of the championship. Their forwards missed at least a dozen scoring chances and the dozen offenders were Qazi Ashfaq and Noman. Had Qazi Ashfaq and Noman availed the opportunities which came their way Pakistan could surely have won another gold. Following this debacle their participation in the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games is now doubtful.

About the athletics, it is better not to write much because the team management hadn't many good prospects at their disposal. Ace hurdler Ghulam Abbas and some others like Banaras Khan showed miserable form winning only three golds, six silvers and five bronzes for a total of 14 medals. The squad selection left much to be desired and due to some hasty decisions some undeserving athletes were picked more for a joyride at the expense of more deserving players. Moreover, one extra official was selected, replacing a deserving athlete! But Shabana Akhtar, with a sensational leap of 5.95 metres in the long jump, which won the country its first-ever gold medal in the women's events of track and field, provided some redemption.

28 new records set

Twenty-eight records were shattered in the Sixth SAF Games, marking an overall improvement in the standard of regional sports, writes BSS.

Sixteen of the new records were in athletics, eight in shooting and four in swimming.

Bangladesh produced their best performance in the Games at the Gulshan shooting range where its shooters creditably set five of the eight records in the discipline.

Two other records were also created by Bangladeshis — in the prestigious men's 100m sprint and the 200m breast-stroke swimming.

Commonwealth Games gold winning shooter Ateequr Rahman set a new record in the individual men's air pistol, scoring 569 out of a possible 600. The previous mark was 562.

Ateeq, alongwith Asif Hossain and Abdus Sattar Nini, established a new record in the team event as well with a total score of 1687 against the previous score of 1681 out of a possible 1800.

Saiful Islam Chowdhury created a new mark in the men's air rifle with his individual score of 580 out of a possible 600. He, alongwith Fazle Rabbi and Syed Ashfaq Fayaz, made a new team mark by scoring 1727.

Bangladesh's Kazi Shahana Parvin, Farzana Hossain Shonia and Sabrina Sultana set a new record in the women's standard rifle prone team event scoring 1713 out of a possible 1800. The individual record in the event was set by Indian Roopa Unnikrishnan. She scored 583.

In athletics, South Asian athletes showed a remarkable degree of progress, setting up 16 new SAF Games records. Bangladesh's proud sprinter

Bimal Chandra Tarafdar established a new mark in the 100m sprint to become the fastest man of South Asia. A Higher Secondary student of the Bangladesh Kirra Shikha Protishtan (BKSP). Bimal timed 10.61 seconds against the previous Games record of 10.68 seconds, set by India's A Natarajan in 1989 at the Islamabad Games.

India's ace long distance runner Bahadur Prasad displayed a splendid performance in his events and claimed three golds, establishing new marks in the 1500m run, the 5000m and the 10,000m. He rewrote the 1500m mark with a time of 3 mins. 42.16 secs. The previous best time was 3 mins. 46.93 secs. In the 5,000m Bahadur clocked 14 mins. 12.25 secs against a record of 14 mins. 23.7 secs and in the 10,000m his time was 29 mins. 30.23 secs against the old record of 30 mins. 13.04 secs.

Shri Lanka's Damiyanti Darsa established a new mark in the women's 200m sprint by clocking 23.84 seconds to earn a gold. The old record was 23.85 seconds.

Amandeep Kaur of India set up a new record in the women's shot put with a throw of 14.57 metres. The existing record was 13.99 metres.

In the men's discus, Indian Shakti Singh established a new record with 55.48 metres replacing the previous record of 55.02 metres.

Another Indian, J S Waraich, set a new record in the men's hammer throw with 62.12 metres. The old record was 62.10 metres.

Shri Lankan sprinter Sugarh Tilkeeratne created a new mark in the men's 400m, clocking 46.58 seconds against the previous record of 47.10 seconds. His compatriot M A Sriyani

Kulawansa broke the women's 100m hurdles record with a time of 13.73 seconds against the old timing of 14.25 seconds.

Indian ace runner Shiny Wilson set a new record in the women's 800m clocking 2 mins 04.3 seconds, better than the 2 mins 05.11 seconds until the games here.

India's Molly Chacko shattered the women's 1500m mark with a time of 4 mins 21.20 seconds. The previous timing was 4 mins 39.86 secs.

Indians also established records in the 4x100m and 4x400m relays clocking 45.10 seconds and 3 mins 37.04 seconds respectively.

Pakistan's Ghufuran Hossain set up a new mark in the men's shot put with 17.46 metres against the previous record of 17.10 metres.

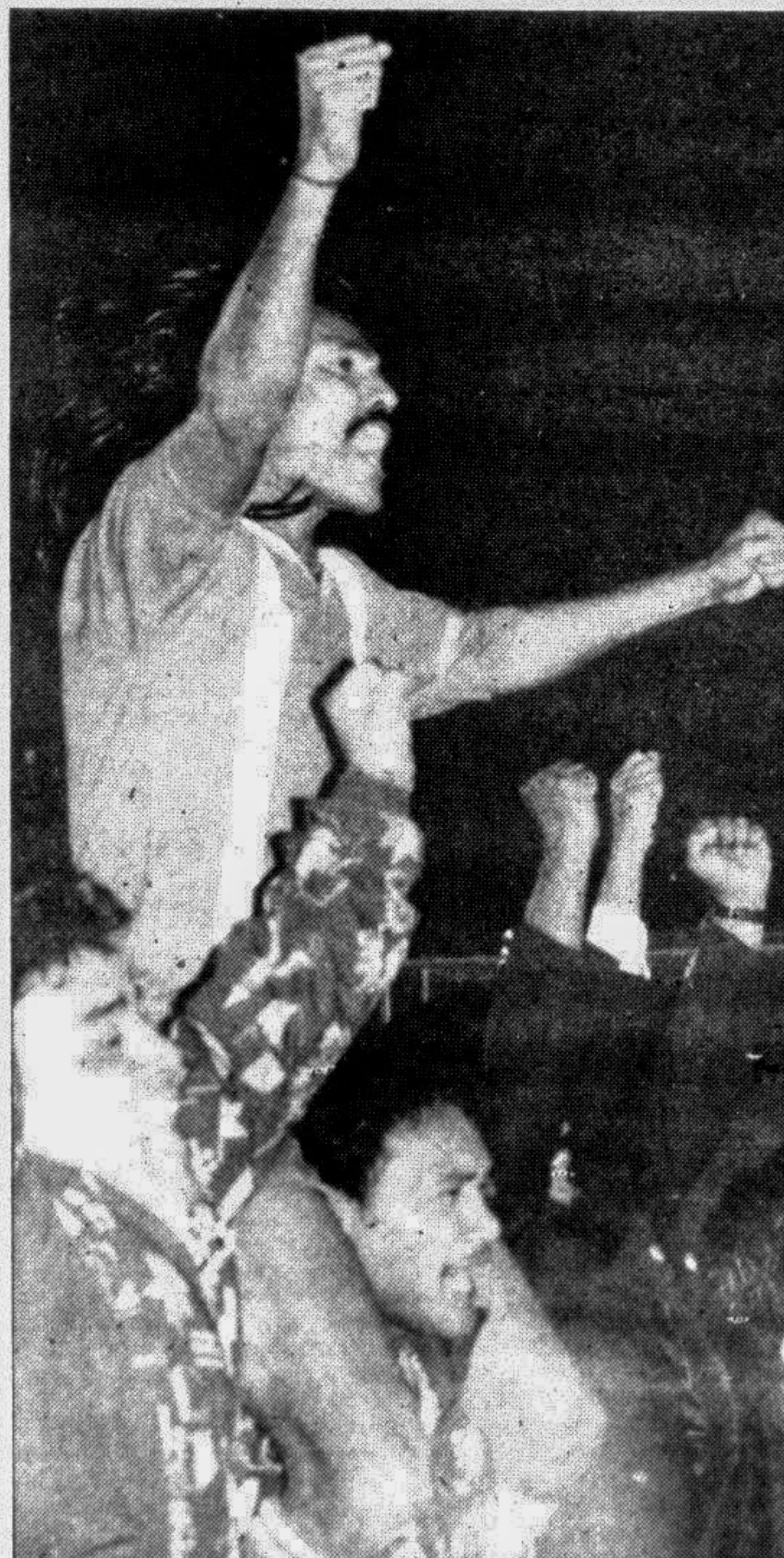
Ranjit Subasinghe of Sri Lanka established a new mark in the men's 800m, clocking one min 47.56 seconds against the earlier timing of one min 48.38 seconds.

There were four records in the swimming competition with the first established by Bangladesh's promising swimmer Qarar Mizanur Rahman in the 200m breast-stroke. He swam the distance in a time of two mins 33.38 secs against the previous mark of two mins 37.35 secs.

India's Jai Abhijith set a new record in the 1500m freestyle with a time of 16 mins 53.85 secs against the existing best timing of 17 mins 11.82 secs.

Rajeev Nagpal, another Indian, set a new mark in the 200m butterfly clocking mins 13.24 secs. The previous best was 2 mins 17.96 secs.

Pakistan's 4x200m free-style relay quartet set up a new mark in the event clocking 8 mins 18.47 secs against the previous record of 8 mins 19.03 secs.



A jubilant Raju Shakya of Nepal cheered by one of his delighted teammates after his side clinched the Sixth SAF Games football title beating India in the final at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. — Star photo