

Sport

Chinese walk to two golds

HIROSHIMA, Oct 10: China advanced its campaign to dominate track and field competition at the Asian Games Monday with Games best performances in men's and women's walking events and a record-breaking hammer throw, reports AP.

But, the Japanese broke the Chinese monopoly with a 1-2 finish in the men's 10,000 metres, won by Toshinari Takoaka in a Games record 28 minutes, 15.48 seconds.

Teammate Jun Hiratsuka, who stayed close until the final stretch, captured the silver in 28:18.10 and also bettered the 8-year-old mark of 28:26.74.

Alyan al Qahtani, who stubbornly stuck to the two Japanese until the last three laps, gave Saudi Arabia its first track medal with a bronze in a 28:41.18.

The Chinese especially their formidable women, are expected to take the lion's share of the 43 gold medals at stake. The women hold all but one Asian record in track and field, and three world records by runners in what has been dubbed 'Ma's Army.'

One threat to the Chinese women's domination is Taiwan's Wang Huel-chen who clipped a games record in a 200-metre heat by one-hundredth of a second, finishing in 23.41 seconds.

Walking in a drizzle that persisted through the day, Chen Shaoguo won the men's 20-kilometre walk in one hour 21 minutes, 15 seconds, the best recorded performance in any Asian Games. There are no formal records since courses can vary widely. Chen also has registered the best Asian performance at this distance.

Favoured countryman Bu Lingtang, ranked No. 1 in the world, won the silver in 1:21:56 and Valery Borisov of Kazakhstan took the bronze. The previous best effort in the event was 1:23:16.

In the women's 10-kilometre walk, it was another Chinese 1-2 finish, with world champion Gao Hongmiao taking to gold in 44:11 and teammate Guy Yan finishing in 44:18. Yuko Sato of Japan walked to a bronze in 46:51. The previous best in that event was 44:77.

Bi Zhong of China broke his own Games record of 71.30 metres with a winning heave of 72.24 in the hammer throw. Japan's veteran Koji Murofushi was the silver medalist with 67.48 and Pakistan broke into the medals chart via a 66.70 effort by Aqarab Abbas.

After four of seven events in the women's heptathlon, Syria's Ghada Sheaa was leading with 3,626 points, followed by Taiwan's Ma Chunping with 3,511 and China's

Zhang Xiaohui with 3,323.

Zhang took the 100-metre hurdles in 14.04 and Ma won the high jump with a leap of 1.84 metres. Ghada had victories in the 200 metres with a 24.67-second sprint and in the shot put with 14.33 metres.

Talal Mansoor of Qatar took it easy with a 10.45-second run in qualifying of the men's 100metres, in which he hopes to win his third straight Asian gold. He holds both the Games

records in the 100 and 200 metres.

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