

Humpy wins chess gold, first for India

India's wait for a gold medal at the 15th Asian Games here finally ended late Monday when chess Grandmaster Koneru Humpy outplayed her final opponent in the women's rapid Swiss category.

Humpy, 19, defeated Dana Aketayeva of Kazakhstan, her ninth and final-round opponent, to grab the gold medal and won what was India's lone medal of the day.

Humpy, who was shocked by Atousa Porukashiyan of Iran in the sixth round, made no mistake on the final day with three straight wins and finished with eight points of maximum possible nine.

A former world junior champion and current world No. 1 in under-20 category, Humpy played confidently and at a fast clip as she outplayed Dana.

'My only mistake was in the sixth round but I made up with the other games,' said Humpy, who will play with K. Sasikiran and P. Harikrishna in the team event next.

China's Zhao Xue won the silver with 7.5 points and the Chinese-born Qatari Zhu Chen clinched the bronze with 5.5 points as the sport made its debut at the quadrennial continental games.

The individual events were played on the rapid format, with 25 minutes for each play plus 10 seconds incremental time for each move.

In the men's category, Harikrishna and Sasikiran, who were top seeds and expected to strike medals, disappointed. They finished 11th and 13th respectively.

Murtas Kazhgaleyev of Kazakhstan won the gold with 7.5 points, Dao Thien Hai of Vietnam the silver with 7 points and Bu Xiangzhi of China the bronze with 7 points.

Humpy, who beat Irina Kharisma Sukandar of Indonesia in the seventh round, added the scalp of Mahri Geldyyeva (Turkmenistan) in the eighth round.

At that stage she was half a point ahead of her nearest rivals, including Zhao Xue of China and Zhu Chen of Qatar, who made a late surge.

The first Indian woman to win a world title, Humpy has won a string of world championships in various age group categories. She is coached by her father Ashok Koneru and she is India's first woman to achieve a men's Grandmaster title.

Humpy also won the World Junior Championships.

She was confident of the gold soon after her seventh round win. After beating Irine Kharisma of Iran she said: 'It was an easy game. Psychology played an important role and I won comfortably.'

Speaking of her ambition at these Games, she added: 'My ambition is to win two gold medals here.'

'I feel great and, yeah, I am a Grandmaster and I am renamed No. 1.'

Results of Round 7th to 9th rounds:

Women rapid:

Rd 7: Koneru Humpy (IND) beat Irina Kharisma Sukandar (INA)

Rd 8: Mahri Geldyyeva (TKM) lost to Koneru Humpy (IND)

Rd 9: Koneru Humpy beat Dana Aketayeva (KAZ)

Men: Rapid:

Rd 7: Utut Adianto (INA) lost to K Sasikiran (IND)

Rd 7: P Harikrishna (IND) beat Meylis Annaberdiyev (TKM)

Rd 8: K Sasikiran (IND) beat Qang Yue (CHN)

Rd 8: Dao Thien Hai (VIE) beat P Harikrishna (IND)

Rd 9: K Sasikiran lost to Murtas Kazhgaleyev (KAZ)

Rd 9: P Harikrishna beat Ehsan Maghami Ghaem (IRI)

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