

Games end in style



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● **China topped the medals table for the 10th Games in succession**

● **Next games at Hangzhou in China**

TDT, AFP | Jakarta, Indonesia

The 18th Asian Games closed in a glittering ceremony in Jakarta yesterday as hosts Indonesia dreamed of stepping up to host the Olympics in 2032.

A show of Indonesia's rich cultural traditions was highlighted at the closing ceremony, witnessed by a full-house crowd at Gelora Bung Karno stadium.

The ceremony reflected peace, stability, togetherness and prosperity, emphasised particularly by the two Koreas unifying for the first time at an Asian Games.

Bahrain's delegation, headed by Bader Nasser, were among thousands of athletes from 45 nations in ponchos marched in heavy rain at the stadium at the close of a two-week tournament featuring 40 sports.

The Kingdom's heroes made the best-ever appearance in the history of the game, having won 26 medals in total (12 gold, 7 silver, 7 bronze) and were 11th overall out of 45 countries.

"I declare the 18th Asian Games closed," Sheikh Ahmad Al Fahad Al Sabah, president of the Olympic Council of Asia, told the packed crowd.

"You did it! You made the energy of Asia come through... Jakarta has the capability to host any such major international event," he added.

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all sportspersons of the continent to meet in four years at Hangzhou, in China, and the symbolic handing over of the OCA Flag to Mayor of Hangzhou Xu Li Yi.

Indonesia has defied expectations to host a smooth Games, which with 17,000 athletes and officials is second in size only to the Olympics.

Riding high on the Games' success, President Joko Widodo has announced a bid to hold the 2032 Olympics -- which would have seemed unthinkable just a few weeks ago.

The president addressed the ceremony by video link from an emergency shelter in Lombok, where a string of earthquakes in recent weeks killed 555 people.

"This (Games) is the energy of Asia united to make a difference

to the world," he said.

Olympics chief Thomas Bach has welcomed Indonesia's bid but he warned the sprawling Southeast Asian country needed to maintain the positive energy generated by the Games.

"I think what is important now for Indonesia is to keep the momentum of this Games," he said. "So for you now not to fall into a black hole the moment after everybody has left."

Shaikh Ahmad also called on all sportspersons of the continent to meet in four years at Hangzhou, in China, and the symbolic handing over of the OCA Flag to Mayor of Hangzhou Xu Li Yi.

Bumper Games for Indonesia

China topped the medals table for the 10th Games in succes-



President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad al-Sabah (C) smiles next to a representative of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee (L) as Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan (R) kisses the torch during the closing ceremony of the 2018 Asian Games at the Gelora Bung Karno main stadium in Jakarta



Japan's swimmer Ikee Rikako (2nd R), who won six gold medals during the games, poses for a photo with a cheque for 50,000 USD after being named as the "Most Valuable Player (MVP)" at an awards ceremony

sion, a streak stretching back to New Delhi 1982, with a runaway 132 golds.

They will now look to make a deafening statement by repeating the feat at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, capital of their war-time colonisers and bitter rivals Japan.

Japan, who won the Games' 465th and final gold medal in Sunday's mixed team triathlon, placed a distant second with 75 golds, while South Korea had 49 and hosts Indonesia finished with 31.

Japanese swimmer Rikako Ikee, who became the first wom-

an to six gold medals at a single Games, was named the best athlete or Most Valuable Player.

"I still haven't won a world title so that's my next goal," she said after a small awards ceremony on Sunday.

The 18-year-old, who looks set to be the face of the Tokyo 2020 Games, stole the limelight at the pool from China's triple Olympic champion Sun Yang and Singaporean butterfly hero Joseph Schooling.

Premier League star Son Heung-min's joyous celebration at winning football gold, a title that earned him an exemption from South Korea's military service, will live long in the memory.

Tobacco and banking billionaire Michael Bambang Hartono, one of Indonesia's richest men, was the Games' oldest medallist at 78, in the card game bridge.

He is 66 years older than 12-year-old Indonesian skateboarder Bunga Nyimas, whose bronze medal in the street event made her the youngest athlete to mount a podium.

They were part of a bumper Games for Indonesia, whose 31 golds was a record for a Southeast Asian country and who, more importantly, proved the critics wrong by hosting a successful tournament.

Despite concerns over air pollution, traffic and a pre-Games police crackdown that killed dozens, the venues were ready on time and most events went off smoothly.

It came after the 2011 Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia were plagued by corruption and delays -- and may have put the country in line to host the biggest tournament of all, the Olympics.

Hamilton triumphs in Italy as Ferrari flounder

Monza, Italy

Championship leader Lewis Hamilton delivered one of his greatest races Sunday when he wrecked Ferrari's homecoming party as he stormed to a record-equalling fifth Monza victory in his Mercedes at the Italian Grand Prix.

The defending world champion produced a perfectly-judged race of raw aggression and astute tyre-management to fin-



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton holds his trophy

68th

career victory of Hamilton helped him enlarge his championship lead from 17 to 30 ahead of Vettel

ish 8.7 seconds ahead of Kimi Raikkonen, who on Saturday had claimed pole position for Ferrari with the fastest lap in Formula One history.

His 68th career victory and sixth this year enlarged his lead from 17 points to 30 ahead of Sebastian Vettel, who finished fourth in the second Ferrari after spinning on the opening lap after a clash with the Briton as he passed him at the second chicane. Valtteri Bottas came

home third ahead of Vettel with Max Verstappen taking fifth place in the classified result, after finishing third on the road, following a time penalty.

Hamilton's fifth Italian win drew him level with seven-time world champion Michael Schumacher. Romain Grosjean finished sixth for Haas ahead of Esteban Ocon and his Force India team-mate Sergio Perez, Carlos Sainz who was ninth for Renault and Lance Stroll of Williams.