

# GOLDS WON, AIMS NOT MET

**Toh clinches three Asiad titles, but 'not ecstatic' after failing to set personal bests**

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Despite accounting for all three of Singapore's gold medals at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games, swimmer Toh Wei Soong was still not fully satisfied with his performances.

The 25-year-old, who clinched two titles at the Hangzhou Aquatic Sports Arena on Friday, felt that he had been "slow".

First, he clocked 28.81 seconds in the men's S7 50m freestyle final to finish ahead of China's Wang Jingang (30.39sec) and Huang Xianquan (31.18sec).

While he was 0.16sec behind his own national mark, Toh had bettered the Asiad record of 28.97sec set by China's Pan Shiyun in 2014.

Later, the National University of Singapore student added to his tally in the S7 50m butterfly final, winning in 30.49sec, nearly a second off his 29.50sec national record. Huang was second (32.17sec) while India's Suyash Narayan Jadhav was third (32.22sec).

On Thursday, Toh had won the S7 100m backstroke in 1min 14.99sec – just 0.03sec away from his national best.

Overall, Toh, who had also won a silver in the S7 400m freestyle on Tuesday, had improved on his haul of two golds and a bronze at the 2018 Asiad in Jakarta.

He said after his races: "I would say that I have been too slow for my liking. They aren't exactly the targets I had set..."

"But having said that, gold is gold and I am grateful to represent Singapore and to do us all proud."

When asked what those targets were, Toh, who has also met the qualifying standards for the 2024 Paris Paralympics in the S7 100m back, 50m free and 50m fly, added: "I would have preferred personal bests."

"We are gunning for the Paralympics and, in light of that, the



Toh Wei Soong has met the 2024 Paralympics qualifying marks in the S7 100m back, 50m free and 50m fly, the three events he won in China. PHOTO: SPORTSG

times I needed here needed to be much faster.

"The fundamentals were executed but I recognise that I am on a broader journey that does not stop here in Hangzhou."

"Just to clarify, I am not ecstatic about the times but very happy with the gold medals. I am very proud to have brought glory to the nation."

Earlier on Friday, para-archer Nur Syahidah Alim, 38, won the women's individual compound open silver for her first Asiad medal, after losing 144-142 to India's Devi Sheetal in the gold-medal match.

Syahidah, who finished fifth in 2018, said: "I was glad that I shot very well up to the last arrow. I am glad to win a medal for Singapore at the Asian Para Games."

"Between the last Games and this one, I have been working on a lot of things like my technique... I am glad with the performance."

The latest medals took Singapore's final tally to three golds, three silvers and two bronzes.

This was despite the fact that top swimmers Yip Pin Xiu and Sophie Soon were unable to compete in China after their events were cancelled by organisers just three

weeks before the Games. Yip had contributed a gold and two bronzes to the Republic's 3-2-5 tally in 2018.

Besides the medals, there have also been several breakthroughs by Singapore's 31-strong contingent.

Faridah Salleh and Khirmern Mohamad clinched silver and bronze medals respectively, Singapore's first in lawn bowls, on Wednesday.

The previous day, para-shooter Daniel Chan had secured the Republic a spot at the 2024 Paralympics, thanks to his fifth-place finish in the men's SH1 10m air pistol. There

was also a women's singles bronze for table tennis player Claire Toh.

Singapore chef de mission Monique Heah said they are "so proud" of the para-athletes' achievements at the Hangzhou Asiad, which closes on Saturday.

She added: "We hope that more people will acknowledge the hard work that they and the team have put in and show interest in para-sports."

"Only then, can we work towards a vibrant sporting community and more inclusive society."

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