



Record-breaking feat

Hakimi leaps to a personal best and new Games mark

TRIPLE jumper Mohd Hakimi Ismail has surely learnt his lesson.

Two years ago, in the Myanmar SEA Games, Hakimi leapt to a personal best of 16.44m in the fourth jump and was favourite for the gold.

But his hopes were shattered by Vietnam's Nguyen Van Hung, who broke the SEA Games record with an effort of 16.67m in his sixth and last jump.

In Singapore yesterday, Hakimi made sure he didn't suffer the same fate as he broke his national and the SEA Games record to clinch the gold medal.

The 24-year-old from Taiping cleared 16.59m in the second jump to erase his own national record of 16.44m.

Not satisfied, he improved on the mark in the sixth and final jump to break the SEA Games record with a leap of 16.76m – and eclipse Van Hung's 2013 mark.

Thailand's Varunyoo Kongnil took silver with 15.92m while the 26-year-old Van Hung settled for bronze with a poor 15.92m.

Hakimi, who is majoring in sports science at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), admitted that he never expected to break the SEA Games record after the bitter experience in Myanmar.

"I also did not qualify for the Singapore SEA Games after failing to beat my own mark of 16.44m. So, I came to Singapore without high



hopes," said Hakimi, who will feature in the World University Games in Seoul in July.

"I surprised everyone, including myself, by breaking the national and SEA Games record. I am thrilled with my effort as I have been struggling to get my form this year."

Iskandar Alwi, a silver medallist in Myanmar, could only clear 5.05m to win bronze in the men's pole vault event.

Thailand's Porranat Purahong shattered the pole vault record with a height of 5.30m, erasing the old mark of 5.21m set by compatriot Kreetta Sintawacheewa in Vientiane in 2009.

Sprinter Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli, who has a personal best of 11.62, clocked 11.93 to finish fourth in the women's 100m final.

Seventeen-year-old Kayla Anise Richardson of the Philippines and Thailand's Tassaporn Wannakit had to be separated by a photo-finish after they clocked identical 11.76 in the 100m final, with the Filipina declared the winner.

Sprinters Mohd Izzuddin Yahaya and Nixon Kennedy endured a disappointing debut after failing to qualify for the men's 100m final.

The 28-year-old school teacher Izzuddin and Nixon clocked 10.61 and 10.65 respectively in their heats to finish fifth. Filipino Eric Cray won the men's 100m final with a personal best of 10.25.



Simply the best:

Malaysia's Mohd Hakimi Ismail in action during the men's triple jump event at the National Stadium yesterday. Hakimi broke the Games record.