

HOCKEY

India rout Malaysia for third place

INDIA completed their mission in the 7th Sultan of Johor Cup (SOJC) with a roaring finish following an emphatic 4-0 win over Malaysia at the Taman Daya Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The reigning Junior World Cup champions and two-time SOJC winners took bronze after gold medal adventures in 2013 and 2014.

It was India's second successive win over Malaysian in this edition after beating the home side 2-1 in the preliminary round fixture.

Malaysia finished fourth, improving on the fifth position achieved last year after emerging champions in 2011 and runners-up in 2014.

Indian captain Vivek Prasad started the goal rush in the 11th minute; Vishal Antil extended

the lead at the stroke of the first quarter, Shilanand Lakra netted the third (21st) before Vishal returned in the 25th minute to score his second and India's fourth goal.

All the goals came from open play.

Malaysia had two chances to reduce the deficit. A penalty corner late in the second quarter that was squandered by team captain Nik Muhammad Aiman Nik Rozemi when he sent the ball wide.

Muhammad Akhimullah Anuar Esook followed suit but saw his reverse stick shot in the 28th minute saved by goalkeeper Senthamizh Shankar.

"Overall it was a learning experience for the players who are young and I am confident they will grow out of this with valuable exposure," said Malaysia coach Wallace Tan.

Meanwhile in the final, defending champions Australia retained the title for the second year running by beating Britain 2-0 thanks to goals from Joel Rintala (4th minute) and Nanthan Ephraums (35th minute).