

Shobana tops in Delhi



Good show: Shobana Jayapal posing with the national flag after winning the Under-21 kumite gold medal for the below 55kg category in New Delhi yesterday.

Arivalagan's protege bags Commonwealth title

By LIM TEIK HUAT

PETALING JAYA: Shobana Jayapal, a protege of former national coach P. Arivalagan, showed she is a top exponent in the making for Malaysia after bagging the gold medal in the Commonwealth Karate Championships in New Delhi.

The 19-year-old beat India's P.C. Vanairuasti 2-0 in the final to win the women's Under-21 kumite below 55kg event in her first overseas assignment.

Shobana shot into the limelight after winning the Sukma (Malaysia Games) gold for Federal Territories in Perlis last year.

Shobana, who will enrol for further studies at the Nottingham University Malaysia Campus in Semenyih, Selangor, was absorbed into the national back-up squad after her Sukma triumph.

"Shobana fought well and did not show any nerves despite her limited international experience. I hope she will be more motivated to

achieve even better results in the future," said Arivalagan yesterday.

Shobana was not the only Malaysian winner yesterday. Nasteska Sureshar also came out tops in the women's Under-21 kumite below 61kg, beating Sinha Bharti of India 4-0 in the final.

Earlier on Friday, Malaysia bagged two golds through Lugman Shah Ahmad in the boys' Under-12 kata individual and Thiagu Janardhan in the boys' Under-14 kumite below 45kg.

Malaysia also picked up one silver and four bronzes in the seven-nation championships.

S. Thanaraj delivered the silver after he lost 2-5 to India's Suraj Rathee in the men's Under-21 below 67kg kumite final. G. Thinakaran also contributed a bronze in the same event.

The other three bronzes came from S. Vignesh (men's Under-21 below 60kg kumite), Sri Durgashini (women's Under-21 below 50kg kumite) and M. Poovanesan (girls' Under-18 below 53kg kumite).