

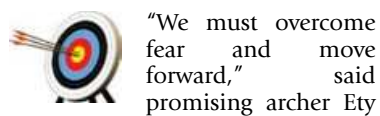


PHOTO: COLLECTED

Ety Khatun, who had become the first female athlete from the country to win three gold medals in a single edition of the SA Games last year in Pokhara, is now reduced to practising inside her house after having received bows from the Bangladesh Archery Federation last month.

'We must overcome fear and move forward'

SABBIR HOSSAIN



"We must overcome fear and move forward," said promising archer Ety Khatun, who emerged as a national star after achieving an individual milestone by becoming the first female athlete from the country to win three gold medals in a single edition of the South Asian Games in December last year in Nepal.

The 15-year old from Chuadanga was eagerly waiting to return to proper practice because she knew better from a previous experience that a long break from proper training means one has to start from the scratch.

"It doesn't matter how much you train inside your house, there will always be a deficiency if you don't do outdoor training and you will feel it when you return to real business. I am saying this from my previous experience. Last year I had

missed a camp for one-and-a-half months due to exams and it took me eight months to get back my rhythm," Ety told The Daily Star.

"I couldn't train for the first three months after lockdown started in March. I only had some physical exercise at that time. But a month ago, I received bows from the federation, and I have been training inside my house since then. We are expecting the camp to start after the Eid break," she said.

The youngster is aware of the lurking danger of Covid-19, but she believes athletes should take the challenge of the new normal and they cannot wait for an indefinite period of time.

"We have to be careful and must follow hygiene rules and protocols keeping in mind the risk of infection but we have to overcome the fear of coronavirus and move forward. I think we must return to the field. We will be safer there if we can maintain the safety measures,"

opined Ety.

"The most important thing for an archer is to practise shooting arrows. But I can't do that right now because I don't have the opportunity to train outside my house. Archery is such a game that if we don't practise for two days in a row, our performance will drop on the third day. So, it goes without saying how much we suffered because of staying home. I am trying hard and federation officials are also helping us stay healthy so that we can return to training with full fitness," she said, adding that she has been getting great support from coach Martin Frederick.

She also said that she was always trying to stay positive in the current crisis. "To be honest, I never felt too much stress. Many people have been affected by the coronavirus. It has spread all over the country. I am just trying to be careful."

She was, however, a bit concerned

about her financial troubles. "I'm in a lot of financial trouble. At the very beginning of the lockdown, I got Tk 4,000 from the federation and before the Eid-ul-Fitr, State Minister for Youth and Sports, Zahid Ahsan Russell, distributed each of us Tk 10,000. Unfortunately, I didn't get any support from my club and they have not contacted me so far."

"I always try to make my parents happy and since they have no son, I want to play that role and that's why I want to be successful. My SA Games successes brought smile on their faces and my life has also changed a lot. I am chasing a bigger dream as I am looking forward to play in the Olympics in future," she said.

The young archer is looking forward to making the word 'archery' popular among sportslovers in the country. "Everyone knows it as the bow and arrow game, but hardly the name archery. I want to change that."

Twenty20 World Cup postponed

AGENCIES

This year's Twenty20 World Cup, which was scheduled to begin in Australia on Oct. 18, has been postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the governing International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Monday.

ICC Chief Executive Manu Sawhney said: "We have undertaken a comprehensive and complex contingency planning exercise and through this process, our number one priority has been to protect the health and safety of everyone involved in the sport."

The decision to postpone the ICC Men's T20 World Cup was taken after careful consideration of all of the options available to us and gives us the best possible opportunity of delivering two safe and successful T20 World Cups for fans around the world.

"Our Members now have the clarity they need around event windows to enable them to reschedule lost bilateral and domestic cricket. Moving the Men's Cricket World Cup to a later window is a critical element of this and gives us a better chance of maintaining the integrity of the qualification process. This additional time will be used to reschedule games that might be lost because of the pandemic ensuring qualification can be decided on

the field of play.

"Throughout this process we have worked closely with our key stakeholders including governments, Members, broadcasters, partners and medical experts to enable us to reach a collective decision for the good of the game and our fans. I would like to thank everyone involved for their commitment to a safe return to cricket."

At Monday's meeting of the IBC Board (the commercial subsidiary of the ICC), windows for the next three ICC men's events were also agreed to bring clarity to the calendar and give the sport the best possible opportunity over the next three years to recover from the disruption caused by COVID-19.

The IBC Board agreed to continue to monitor the rapidly changing situation and assess all the information available in order to make a considered decision on future hosts to ensure the sport is able to stage safe and successful global events in 2021 and 2022.

The IBC Board will also continue to evaluate the situation in relation to being able to stage the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2021 in New Zealand in February next year. In the meantime, planning for this event continues as scheduled.



Barcelona's Lionel Messi takes on a host of Alaves players during their last match of the La Liga season on Sunday. The Argentine superstar may have seen his side relinquish the title but he grabbed the top scorer's award for a record seventh time with 25 goals.

PHOTO: REUTERS



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh batsman Imrul Kayes completed running and batting sessions yesterday at BCB's practice facilities in Mirpur for the first time since the coronavirus outbreak. He was one of the nine cricketers to have resumed individual training.

Time is right to axe De Gea, says Shearer

REUTERS, Undated

Manchester United should replace goalkeeper David de Gea with Dean Henderson next season, former England striker Alan Shearer has said after the Spaniard's disappointing display in Sunday's 3-1 FA Cup semifinal loss to Chelsea.

De Gea, 29, was at fault for Olivier Giroud's opener late in the first half and then allowed Mason Mount's shot to squirm through him and into the net after the restart.

A string of errors from De Gea have prompted calls for him to be replaced as first choice by Henderson, who is drawing praise for his showings on loan at Sheffield United.

"If the goalkeeper makes one mistake, or possibly two, you think you should stick with him," former Newcastle United striker Shearer told the BBC.

"But it keeps happening. I think you only bring Dean Henderson back to Manchester United as the number one, or you keep him where he is to keep gaining experience. I think that time has come."

United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer described De Gea as



Manchester United goalkeeper David de Gea lets one slip through his hands during their 3-1 defeat against Chelsea in the FA Cup semifinal on Sunday, prompting many to once again call for his axe from the Red Devils' No 1 goalkeeping spot.

PHOTO: REUTERS

mentally strong after the game, but former club defender Phil Neville said the keeper was low on confidence.

"He's unrecognisable from the goalkeeper that won (club) player of the year four years out of five years. He's making mistakes. A confident, assured, on-form De Gea saves all three (goals)," Neville said.

"If I was Solskjaer, then I would be worried because of his performance levels. They've dipped and his inconsistency is costing United games."

"I wouldn't leave him out yet. His credentials are still up there with the best in the world. He's just lost all his confidence."

Ballon d'Or cancelled

AFP, Paris

The Ballon d'Or will not be awarded this year due to the extraordinary conditions created by the pandemic, organisers France Football announced on Monday.

It will be the first time the trophy given for the world's best men's footballer has not been awarded since Englishman Stanley Matthews won the inaugural edition in 1956.

"There will be no edition in 2020, because it turns out, after thoughtful consideration, that all the conditions are not met," said Pascal Ferre, the editor of the magazine.

France Football said it would be unfair to vote on the world's best player when some leagues, including the French Ligue 1, cancelled their seasons early.

The women's Ballon d'Or, which was first awarded in 2018, has also been cancelled.

Hathurusingha joins NSW Blues

AFP, SYDNEY

Former Sri Lanka and Bangladesh coach Chandika Hathurusingha joined the New South Wales Blues Monday as an assistant to Phil Jaques.

It is the second stint at this club for Chandika, who was sacked by Sri Lanka after their lacklustre World Cup campaign last year. He held a similar role from 2011 and 2014.

"It is one of the best working environments I have experienced being part of NSW," he said. "The best part is there is always a lot of talent coming through NSW cricket."

Rahm rises to the top

AFP, Los Angeles



Jon Rahm became the first Spaniard since Seve Ballesteros in 1989 to hold golf's world number one ranking, fending off a late challenge Sunday to win the US PGA Memorial tournament.

Rahm holed out an amazing 31-foot chip shot at the par-3 16th and, despite a two-stroke penalty that turned it from a birdie to a bogey, took a three-stroke victory over American Ryan Palmer that boosted him over Rory McIlroy atop the rankings.

"I don't know how to describe it," Rahm said. "It has been a goal since I was 13-, 14-years-old."

Rahm was among the Spanish youth inspired by the feats of Ballesteros, a five-time major champion who died in 2011 at age 54 of brain cancer.

"Seve is a very special player to all of us, and to be second to him, it's a true honor," Rahm said. "Anytime I can join Seve at anything, it's incredible."

Rahm said the moment was difficult to comprehend in part because his thoughts were with his family, two members of which have died from COVID-19.



England fast bowler Stuart Broad celebrates the wicket of West Indies batsman Shai Hope during the final day of the second Test at Old Trafford, Manchester yesterday. West Indies lost both their opening batsmen early and were 25-3 at lunch after England declared in the first session to set the visitors a target of 312. Earlier, England resumed on their overnight score of 37-2 and Ben Stokes (L) got straight into action, looking to cart the West Indies bowlers all around the empty stadium during his unbeaten 57-ball 78.

PHOTO: REUTERS

