

Mukhles redeems himself to give Bangladesh her 2nd SAF gold



Star file photo of SAF 200m breast-stroke gold winner Mukhlesur Rahman.

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Mukhlesur Rahman struck the second gold for Bangladesh, splashing his way ahead of all other competitors in the 200m breaststroke in the swimming competition of the fifth SAF Games at the indoor stadium swimming pool here today, reports BSS.

The lone gold-medallist of the country in the last SAF Games in Islamabad, Mukhles earned his first individual gold in the Colombo Games in two minutes 34.72 seconds to the cheers from the large crowd that gathered at the newly-built modern swimming pool.

Intikhab Sikkander of Sri Lanka and Ghulam Muhammad of Pakistan bagged the silver and bronze medals respectively, clocking two minutes 34.93 seconds and two minutes 37.58 seconds.

Another Bangladeshi swimmer, Bazul Rahman, finished fourth in two minutes 43.55 seconds.

Bangladesh earned her first gold in the Colombo SAF Games when Kazi Shahana Parveen scored 548 individual points in the women's 3X20 standard rifle of the shooting event yesterday.

Just after completing the final lap, Mukhles burst into tears of joy and said, "Almighty Allah was always with us.

"I am very happy for being able to win a gold for the country, as I did in the last SAF Games," said Mukhlesur Rahman — a junior officer in the Bangladesh Navy.

Mukhles had won the gold in the 100 metre breaststroke in a record time of one minute 10.05 seconds in the last SAF Games.

Earlier, on December 23, Mukhles missed the gold by a hair's breadth in a photo-finish with Sri Lanka's Intikhab Sikkander in the 100-metre breaststroke. Intikhab took the gold while Mukhles had to re-

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Earlier, on December 23, Mukhles missed the gold by a hair's breadth in a photo-finish with Sri Lanka's Intikhab Sikkander in the 100-metre breaststroke. Intikhab took the gold while Mukhles had to re-

main satisfied with the silver.

Mukhles said, "I was optimistic of winning the gold in the 100m breaststroke. But after failing to do it, I was determined to win the 200m gold and with the blessings of Allah, I have done it today.

"I hope I will improve my timing in future", said the soft-spoken Mukhles, who hails from Kashtpur, Narayanganj. Representative of Bangladesh Olympic Association and former national footballer Enayetur Rahman Khan congratulated Mukhles on behalf of the Bangladesh officials, players and athletes.

In the men's 200m butterfly, Bangladesh's Abdus Salam and Selim Mian finished fourth and fifth in two minutes 19.02 and two minutes 20.52 seconds.

Sri Lanka's star swimmer Julian Bolling, his compatriot Chafari Dulapandan and Rajeev Nagpal of India earned the gold, silver and bronze respectively.

Bolling took 2 mins 11.98 secs, Dulapandan clocked 2 mins 14.89 secs while India's Rajeev Nagpal timed 2 mins 15.17 seconds.

Bolling won another gold today in the men's 1500m freestyle in 17 mins 12.06 secs, while the silver and bronze medals went to India's Rajeev Nagpal and R S Rajith.

Nagpal took 17 mins 50.17 seconds and Rajith returned a time at 17 mins 54.58 seconds.

RELAY BRONZE

Bangladesh earned another bronze when the women's swimming quartet — Reshama Parvin Dipu, Mahmuda Sharif, Monira Rahman Dalia and Sufia Akhtar — finished third in the women's 4X100m medley relay.

They took five minutes 58.37 seconds for the bronze.

India got the gold in four mins 50.85 seconds while Sri Lanka took the silver clocking four mins 51.22 seconds.

Bangladeshi athletes draw a blank Lankans score a sprint double

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Sri Lanka's S S A Dissanayake became the fastest man of South Asia when the talented Lankan boy powered his way to the most coveted gold of the men's 100m sprint in the athletic competition of the fifth SAF Games at the National Stadium here today, reports BSS.

Dissanayake took 10.77 seconds to cross the distance.

The Lankan sprinter who also won the men's 200m sprint gold here, won the silver and bronze medals in the 100 and 200m sprints in the last Asian in Beijing.

Bangladesh's Shaharuddin Chowdhury was involved in a photo-finish with India's Ananda Natarajan in 10.97 seconds. But the technical officials declared Natarajan as the silver medallist and Shaharuddin was awarded the bronze.

The other Bangladeshi sprinter, Golam Ambia — the country's main hope in the event — finished fourth clocking 10.98 seconds.

Dissanayake had taken 10.71 seconds and Ambia timed 10.75 seconds in the 100m heats yesterday. Natarajan clocked 10.81 seconds and Shaharuddin 10.56 seconds in the heats.

Another Sri Lankan, schoolgirl K V D Dhansha, became the fastest woman of South Asia when she won the gold in

the women's 100m sprint in a record time of 11.93 seconds.

The 16-year-old Dhansha clocked her best timing of 11.72 in the heats yesterday.

She broke the old record of 11.95 seconds set by India's Ashwini Nachappa in the last

Indian contingent during the final selection for the current SAF Games and joined the Indian film industry instead.

Dhansha said she started her athletics career about two years ago when her coach Sunil picked her up for the

In the women's 3,000 metres, India's Molly Chacko established a new SAF record clocking nine minutes 29 seconds against the previous timing of 10 minutes 00.38 seconds set by her compatriot Sumar Rawat in the Calcutta SAF Games.

In the men's shot put, Pakistan's Ghufan Hossain and India's Manjit Singh and Pakistan's Intesham-ul Haq bagged the gold, silver and bronze respectively.

Chufan Hossain hurled the shot 16.12 metres, Manjit Singh threw 15.54 metres and Intesham-ul Haq 15.44 metres.

In the men's 400m, Giasuddin and Mehdi Hasan of Bangladesh got the fifth and seventh positions with times of 48.13 and 48.45 seconds.

Mohammad Sadaqat of Pakistan got the 400m gold clocking 47.62 seconds. India's Mahviya took the silver in 47.74 seconds while Dinesh Perera of Sri Lanka earned the bronze with a time of 47.88 seconds.



SSA DISSANAYAKE fastest man



SHINY WILSON bronze

SHINY SHOCKED

Sri Lanka's Jayamini Illeperuma and K Saranama of India collected the gold and silver.

In the women's 400-metres they took 53.70 seconds and 54.12 seconds respectively.

The favourite, Indian superstar Shiny Wilson, managed the bronze, clocking 56.65 seconds.

Sumita Goswami of Bangladesh finished fifth in the event with a time of one minute 00.39 seconds.

Bangladesh has so far collected two silvers and one bronze in the athletics competitions.

3rd among three

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Bangladesh got the bronze in the women's volleyball of the SAF Games when they lost to India 4-15, 4-15 and 1-15 in the last group match at the indoor stadium here today, reports BSS.

The Bangladesh women finished third and last in the three-team competition.

Bangladesh earlier lost 0-3 to hosts Sri Lanka.

India and Sri Lanka will play tomorrow for the gold.

Shooting bronze for our men

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Bangladesh got a bronze in the team event of the 3x40 free-rifle (men) shooting competition of the fifth SAF Games at the Naval shooting range here today, reports BSS.

The Bangladesh team comprising Nasruddin, O M Haider and Shafique Zaman scored 3253 points to win the bronze.

India and Sri Lanka collected the gold and silver scoring 3349 and 3286 points respectively.

In the individual event, India snatched all the three medals.

India's Pallangappa scored 1124 points followed by Bhagirath Samat with 1118 and Raj Kumar with 1107.

Bangladesh's Nasruddin scored 1101, O M Haider 1086, and Shafique Zaman 1066 points.

MEDALS TABLE

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Bangladesh are still in the fourth position in the medals tally with two gold, five silver and 20 bronze medals at the end of the eighth day of the fifth SAF Games here today, reports BSS.

India are on top of the table with 38 golds, 36 silvers and 24 bronzes followed by hosts Sri Lanka with 31 gold, 23 silver and 25 bronze medals. Pakistan got 16 golds, 21 silvers and 15 bronzes, while Nepal bagged one gold, three silvers and 17 bronzes.

The medals tally (tabulate under gold, silver, bronze):

	G	S	B
India	38	36	24
Sri Lanka	31	23	25
Pakistan	16	21	15
Bangladesh	2	5	20
Nepal	1	3	17

SAF Games in Islamabad in 1989.

Dhansha said it was her first international achievement and she was quite happy for it.

I M Cooray, also from Sri Lanka, won the silver clocking 12.23 seconds while Indian Rachita Panda bagged the bronze with a time of 12.33 seconds.

Bangladesh's Firoza Khatun, who was fourth in the last SAF Games, finished sixth in 12.68 seconds and Najma Haider Rafoza seventh in 13.08 seconds.

Indian athlete Ashwini Nachappa, who was the fastest woman of South Asia winning the gold in the 100m sprint in the Islamabad Games in 1989, withdrew herself from the

track and field in early 1990. Sunil was the fastest man of Sri Lanka for 20 years. Dissanayake Broke Sunil's record in this year she said.

More records

Two more records were set today in the women's high jump and the 3,000 metres.

Sri Lankan girl M Sriyani Kulawansa created a new SAF record in the women's high jump with a leap of 1.75 metres.

The previous record was 1.68 metres, set in the Calcutta SAF Games by India's Anjela Lincy, who got the silver today with a leap of 1.71 metres, also a new record.

Another Indian girl, Savita Ponnappa, got the bronze cleaning 1.67 metres.

Leaders United on a goal spree

LONDON, Dec 27: Manchester United opened up a two-point lead in the English league yesterday with a 6-3 romp at Oldham, but they lost captain Bryan Robson in the process for three weeks, reports AFP.

The former England skipper and inspiration in United's midfield aggravated a calf strain in his comeback game as his side smashed six league goals in a match for the first time in 14 years.

With second-placed Leeds held to a 3-3 draw by struggling Southampton, the joy of United manager Alex Ferguson was no surprise.

He said: "We always looked the better side and some of our football was excellent. We got off to a flying start and even when Oldham equalised to make it 2-2, I always felt we would score again."

United stormed 2-0 in front through Eire full-back Denis Irwin and Russian winger Andrei Kanchelskis.

Oldham fought back in a sparkling spell second half spell. Striker Graeme Sharp volleyed the first after 48 minutes and midfielder Mike Milligan equalised four minutes later.

United were soon back in front, though. Former Oldham favourite Irwin Grabbed his second on 54 minutes and Brian McClair notched a brace in the 56th and 59th minutes.

Oldham's third came from substitute Paul Bernard, but super-kid Ryan Giggs hit United's sixth.

There were no complaints from Oldham manager Joe Royle.

United are a great side and really bombing at the moment, yet we still scored three goals against the meanest defence in the First Division.

"I thought we had them rattled when we pulled back to 2-2, but it is never easy when 11 internationals catch fire. United were superb."

Leeds, who have played two games more than United, surrendered a 3-1 lead against Saints.

A Steve Hodge double gave Leeds a 2-0 interval lead and although Lain Dowie reduced the deficit on 51 minutes, Gary Speed's 73rd minute effort seemed to have wrapped up three points for the Yorkshire club.

Saints strikers Alan Shearer and Dowie had other ideas. Dowie equalised in the 89th minute.



BRYAN ROBSON .. injured

Leeds boss Howard Wilkinson branded the performance "the most disappointing of my time here. Our ability was always a problem for Southampton."

"But in the world of professional sport ability is not always enough. I'm afraid there were things about our game that had nothing to do with ability or talent."

"We made too many unforced errors and we were not assertive enough. We were content to drift along."

Luton closed within a point of Saints with a shock 1-0 home triumph over champions Arsenal, who were sunk by a late Mick Harford goal.

"It was our worst performance of the season," stormed Gunners chief George Graham after Harford's 10th goal this season kept up Arsenal's jinx at Kenilworth Road, where they have not won in eight years.

"We were lacking in self-motivation and desire, and in terms of both ability and attitude."

Arsenal's Swedish winger Anders Limper came off suffering double vision after clashing with Luton's Mark Pembroke in the opening seconds.

But Luton deserved their win, which manager David Pleat believes will help his young team escape relegation.

"Only time will tell, but we are good enough and showed today that we have the spirit," he said.

Sheffield United manager Dave Bassett was similarly optimistic despite his side crumbling to a 3-0 defeat at home to relegation rivals Coventry.

"It was just of those things.

Coventry won't score three goals in five attempts every time they play," he said.

"We've just got to keep on going and not lose our heads. There are a lot of points to play for yet."

Coventry chief Terry Butcher refused to get carried away after the 17 minute second-half blitz from Stewart Robson, Sean Flynn and Peter Billing.

Butcher said: "At the moment we're fighting for our lives and you've got to compete or you get trodden on. Today we had commitment and a will to win and because of that we got the right result."

West Ham's problems mounted with a 3-1 defeat at Aston Villa. Dwight Yorke, Tony Daley and Kevin Richardson led the way, with Frank McAvennie replying.

Hammers manager Billy Bonds admitted: "We now know we're in a relegation battle. As winning is a habit, so is losing, and we've had a miserable time over the last two months, without a win in our last six games."

Notts County moved up with a 2-0 home success against Chelsea. Dean Yates and Tommy Johnson got the goals.

Third-placed Sheffield Wednesday cut Leeds' lead over them to seven points with a 1-0 win at Everton, who succumbed to a David Hirst strike.

Wednesday boss Trevor Francis commented: "To win away is always satisfying. To have still been in the game 0-0 at half-time today, we've got to consider ourselves very fortunate."

"That was down to two things, one of them Chris Woods and the other one slack finishing from Everton."

Everton forward Tony Cottee missed three golden chances.

"It was just one of those days," he admitted. "I had a lot of good chances in the first half and I should have had a hat-trick."

Nottingham Forest had a successful away day, winning 2-1 at Tottenham despite having Nigel Clough sent off for the first time in his career for a tackle from behind on Spurs scorer Paul Stewart.

Clough, who scored Forest's opener in the 11th minute, can now expect a three-match ban from January 9.

But Forest's disappointment at Clough's red card was eased by Stuart Pearce's injury-time free-kick from 22 yards, which gave them a fifth win in seven visits to white Hart Lane.

The Tottenham manager was at a loss to explain a sixth home defeat in the league while Spurs' away form is so good.

"We're a counter-attacking side and have done very well away, but I don't know what goes wrong at home," said Shreeves.

Liverpool boss Graeme Souness was delighted with his team's display in their goalless draw at Queen's Park Rangers, but not with their finishing.

"I'm a bit disappointed because we're not taking three points back with us," said Souness. "I felt that we played very well, especially in the first half. But that's football and they say Christmas is a time of giving."

Wimbledon manager Peter Withe was equally angry with his side's shooting after their 1-1 home draw with landlords Crystal Palace. "We must start sticking some of our chances away", he fumed.

The Dons had to be satisfied with Warren Barton cancelling out Marco Gabbiadini's goal for Palace.

Steve McMahon, Manchester City's 900,000-pound signing from Liverpool, won on his Maine Road debut, 2-1 against Norwich, but could be out of Saturday's game against Arsenal because of a slight hamstring strain.

McMahon said: "I can't say how long I will be out because I've never had a hamstring in 10 years."

His pain was eased by goals from Niall Quinn and David White, which overhauled Rob Newman's early effort for Norwich.

Paul Wilkinson settled the Second Division's north-east derby with the only goal for Middlebrough at News castle to tighten things at the top.

Blackburn drew 0-0 at Wolverhampton, while Cambridge were denied by Robbie Turner's 86th minute penalty for Plymouth, so all three have 41 points. Blackburn have a better goal difference.

The first three in division three were bracketed on 42 points. Leaders Brentford lost 2-1 at Huddersfield. West Bromwich won 1-0 at Wigan and Birmingham took a point at Darlington.

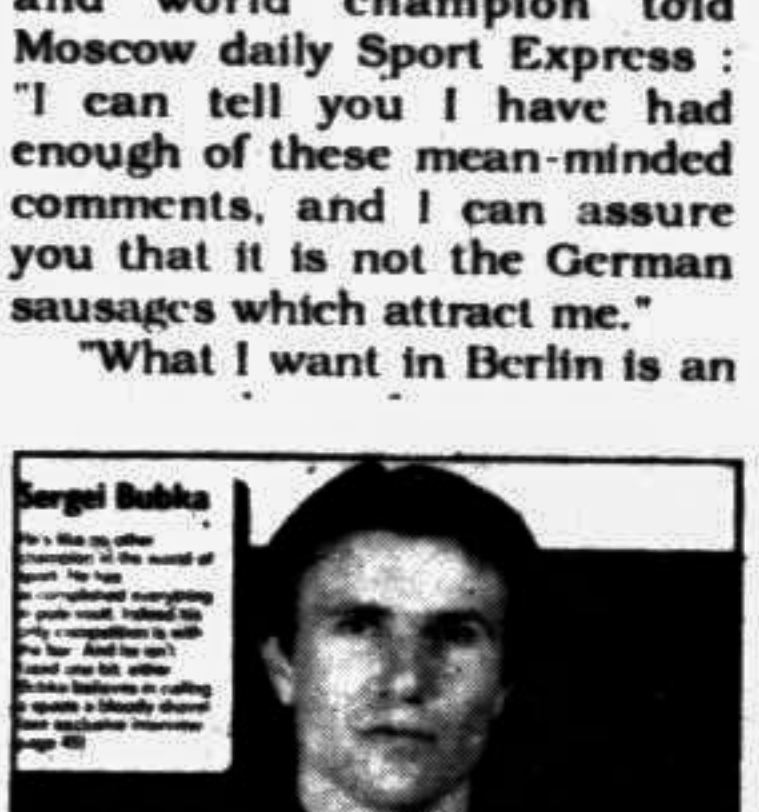
The top four in the fourth — Burnley, Mansfield, Barnet and Blackpool — all lost.

Bubka answers his critics

MOSCOW, Dec 27: Ukrainian pole vault hero Sergey Bubka has hit back at criticism of his move to Berlin, reports AFP.

Bubka, who is spending Christmas in his native Donetsk, has come under attack since signing a one year contract with Berlin athletics club OSC worth an estimated 200,000 marks (135,000 dollars).

The world record holder



SERGEY BUBKA

and world champion told Moscow daily Sport Express: "I can tell you I have had enough of these mean-minded comments, and I can assure you that it is not the German sausages which attract me."

"What I want in Berlin is an

Bubka also defended himself against charges of breaking records only for the money.

"My material independence is equal to the work and talent which I invest in my favourite sport no more and no less."

As for critics who point to his tendency to set new records by just a single centimetre (14 of his 28 world records), Bubka countered that "No sportsman, however pragmatic he might be, would put off till the following day beating a record which he could beat that minute."

He added: "Improvements depend upon my opponents. When I am hard pressed, I have to beat records by several centimeters."

"When I wanted to break the 6m barrier, I didn't hesitate to make vaults that were five to 10 centimetres better."

Suhrawardy Cup finals begin today

The final round of the eighth national youth under-19 football championship for the Suhrawardy Cup begins this afternoon at Naogaon Stadium.

Khulna DSA will take on Nilphamari DSA in the opening match.

Ten teams — eight zonal champions, namely, Chittagong, Khulna, Pabna, Comilla, Tangail, Jhenidah, Nilphamari and Netrakona DSAs, hosts Naogaon and Feni, the winners of the seventh Suhrawardy Cup — are contesting in the finals for the trophy.

Tomorrow, Sunday, Netrakona will meet Comilla.

Karatekas do well in Asia Cup

A Bangladesh karate team comprising eleven members of the Royal Bengal Tiger Karate-Kungfu Club finished runners-up in the third Asia Cup karate championships that recently concluded at the Vilsapur Railway Stadium in Madhya Pradesh, India.

Hosts India became the champions in the meet that commenced on December 18.

India and Sri Lanka collected the gold and silver scoring 3349 and 3286 points respectively.

In the individual event, India snatched all the three medals.

India's Pallangappa scored 1124 points followed by Bhagirath Samat with 1118 and Raj Kumar with 1107.

Bangladesh's Nasruddin scored 1101, O M Haider 1086, and Shafique Zaman 1066 points.

Tennis hopes vanish

COLOMBO, Dec 27: Bangladesh's Shovon Jamaly and Faisal Habib Rahman were eliminated from the men's singles in the tennis competition of the fifth SAF Games at the National Tennis Complex here today, reports BSS.

Shovon Jamaly lost to Pakistan's Davis Cup player Mushaf Zia 0-6, 2-6 in the quarter-finals today.

Mushaf Zia will play in the semifinals against Sri Lanka's Wijesekera, who defeated Indian A Lamba 6-1, 4-6 and 6-1.

Faisal was beaten by Asif Ismail of India 2-6, 3-6 in another quarter-final tie.

Ismail will take on Umesh Walloppillal of Sri Lanka in the semifinal tomorrow. Umesh beat Muhammad Khaliq of Pakistan 6-3, 6-2.

In the women's singles S Siddique Shumi and Datzzy Aziz of Bangladesh also bowed out of the competition. Shumi lost to Sri Lanka's L Weerasuriya 0-6, 0-6 while Datzzy lost to Farah Kurshid of Pakistan 0-6, 0-6.

The winners moved into the women's singles semifinals.

The other two semifinalists were India's Nirupama and N Joishi.

Ansars sports

A three-day annual sports and cultural competition of the Chittagong District Ansars and VDP began at the Ansars training complex at Fays's lake yesterday.

Deputy Director of Ansars and VDP Major (ret) Hamidul Haq, Btr Bikram formally inaugurated the competition.

Ninety competitors are participating in 30 events.

India's veteran swimmer Bula Choudhury on way to winning the women's 200m butterfly at the fifth SAF Games in Colombo on Dec 26. Bula timed 2 min 25.56 sec, a Games record. — AFP photo