



AGONY AND THE ECSTASY: While former national track star Shamima Sattar Mimou tries to comfort Bangladesh's best-SAF Games athletics medal bet sprinter Golam Ambia, who had to be carried off on a stretcher after pulling a muscle during yesterday's 100m heats, Sri Lanka's M A Sriyani Kulawansa (right) acknowledges the cheers from the Mirpur Stadium crowd after her record-breaking feat in the 100m hurdles. Kulawansa took 13.78 seconds to overcome the distance. — Star photos



Indian Hobby Aloysius soars over the bar in the women's high jump of the Sixth SAF Games at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. Aloysius won the gold. — Star photo



Lankan Sugarh Tillekeratne celebrates after creating a new Sixth SAF Games record in the men's 400m sprint at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. Tillekeratne timed 46.68 seconds. — Star photo

VI SAF GAMES SCHEDULE FOR TODAY

Following is the schedule for today's events in the Sixth SAF Games:

Athletics: —Marathon 6 am
Other events — 2 pm to 4 pm at the Mirpur Stadium

—Men's 110m hurdles, javelin, triple jump, 100m sprint and 5,000m run.
—Women's 100m sprint and 1500m run.

Football: Maldives vs Nepal at 3:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)
Pakistan vs India at 5:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Judo: 1 pm, three categories, Mirpur Indoor Stadium.

Kabaddi: Bangladesh vs Pakistan, 2:24 pm
India vs Nepal, 3:45 pm (Hockey Stadium)

Table Tennis: 9:30 am men's and women's doubles, Dhanmondi Indoor Gym.

Shooting: Standard Rifle 3x20 (women) 11:30 am at the Guishan Range.

Swimming: 11 am to 12:30

Wrestling: 2:30 pm to 4 pm at the Hockey Stadium.

Lankans only spanner in Indian march

By A Special Correspondent

Four new records were created on the second day of the athletics competition of the Sixth SAF Games yesterday with India and Sri Lanka going *pari passu* in their claims for novelty at the Mirpur Stadium.

While Indian throwers crossed two milestones in the field events, the Sri Lankans showed an amazing hold on the running events. India's Shakti Singh broke the old record in the discus. His compatriot J S Waraich followed it up with a similar performance in the hammer throw.

Shri Lanka's two record breakers were 400m sprinter Sugarh Tillekeratne and female 100m hurdler Sriyani Kulawansa.

The most popular events — the 100m dashes for men and women — await finalisation today. The long day's journey will begin with the marathon starting as early as six in the morning from the Mirpur Stadium. The day's other events, including the sprint finals, are scheduled for the afternoon,

starting at 2:00 pm.

Sriyani Kulawansa, the 23-year-old Sri Lankan bank employee who has taken to sports as a means to fight poverty, showed superb saltation abilities in the women's 100m hurdles. Zooming to the target with amazing agility, she left her rivals far behind. Her timing of 13.73 seconds became a new record in the annals of the Games.

Her compatriot Sugarh Tillekeratne conjured up a magnificent performance to rewrite the SAF record in the men's 400m run. The twenty-year-old student who finished fourth in the recently held ATF meet in Manila, took 46.58 seconds, thus fulfilling his ambition of running under 47 seconds in this meet. Along with Damiyanti Darsha, his compatriot, Tillekeratne should now consider himself richer for 1000 dollars as an anticipatory gain of the incentive bonus declared before the meet by Sri Lanka's Education Ministry.

Indian athletes seemed to have regained their winning form here after the relative drought in Colombo two years

ago. Picking up from Wednesday's show, they won five of the eight track and field gold medals on offer yesterday, reaffirming their status as the sporting giants of the sub-continent.

The Indian champions swept the track, but as individual performance went, they were hardly spectacular. In most events, the winners were challenged only by their own teammates, whose potential they were familiar with. With none to push them, performances suffered and only one record was shattered by the Indians.

National discus champion Shakti Singh, who had represented the country at the Stuttgart World Championships and the world police games earlier this year, heaved the disc to a distance of 55.49m, the only one to establish a new SAF-Games mark.

Shakti did better than Ajit Bhaduria, who won India the gold in the event at the Asian Track and Field championships at Manila a few weeks ago. Shakti's fifth throw landed at the gold-winning distance, improving upon the 53.72 he had

on his third attempt. Bhaduria couldn't better his third attempt of 53.38m.

The most eye-catching Indian performance of the day was by tiny K Saramma who came into her own with her second consecutive win over the more fancied Shiny Wilson in the women's 400m.

Saramma's defeat of Shiny in the domestic circuit's last meet at Delhi earlier this month appeared to have given the younger girl more confidence in herself.

With yesterday's victory, the Kerala girl who has been concentrating on the sprints, looks ready to face the best in the 400m.

Coming into the final curve, it was Shiny who was ahead of the rest. But twenty-five metres into the home straight Saramma had closed in and was going for gold. Shiny trailed in for silver but had her revenge on Shri Lanka's Jayamani Illeperuma, who had beaten her at Colombo in 1991.

Indian national champion in the hammer throw, the tough-looking JS Waraich, had an easy time. The ONGC engineer

set a new meet record in the event with a throw of 62.12m, much under his national record of 65.78. That mark was created last September, at an international invitation meet in Singapore where Waraich had claimed the gold medal.

Rajesh Bharadwaj, Waraich's sole challenger even back home, was not in such good shape. He was overshadowed by Pakistan's Aqarab Abbas who threw 61.79 for the silver. The Pakistan coach had placed a lot of store in Aqarab, who is the son of Pakistan's hammer-thrower of yore, Commonwealth champion Mohammad Iqbal. Aqarab had recently bettered his father's personal best with an unofficial 63.92m throw.

Pakistan national champion Ghulam Bari could take only the fourth place with 57.90m.

In the women's high jump, young Bobby Aloysius left her senior Angela Lincy crying by clearing 1.71m on her first try. Lincy, who is getting married next month, was planning to quit with a gold medal here. But that slipped out of her grasp when she failed at the height on her first attempt.

Angela Lincy had begun the event at 1.60, while Bobby Aloysius had started at 1.55m. The former had also got stuck at 1.68m, only clearing it on the second try.

Steeplechasers Narendra Singh and Balkar Singh, who landed here late only after their entries were confirmed, both figured among the medals.

While Narendra claimed gold in nine minutes 2.01 seconds, Balkar took the bronze by clocking 9:10.81 behind Pakistan's Muhammad Sadique.

Heptathlon champion K K Geetha and young Kamala B Siddi both did well in the 100m hurdles, which were a one-woman show. Shri Lanka's Sriyani Kulawansa was too good for the rest, romping to a new record time of 13.73 seconds. Geetha and Kamala followed in that order.

Indian long jump champion Shyam Kumar ended up fourth in his event. He had a maximum leap of 7.21m, as against 7.42 by Shri Lanka's T Benildas Fernando, who topped. India's M B Sadasivan, however, got the bronze with a jump of 7.22m.

YESTERDAY'S TRACK & FIELD RESULTS

- Men:**
- 400m: 1. Sugarh Tillekeratne (SL) 46.58 (NMR); 2. Muhammad Sadaqat (Pak) 47.24; 3. P I Sebastian (Ind) 47.32.
- 3,000m steeple-chase: 1. Narendra Singh (Ind) 9:02.1; 2. Muhammad Sadique (Pak) 9:04.15; 3. Balkar Singh (Ind) 9:10.81.
- Discus: 1. Shakti Singh (Ind) 55.49 (NMR); 2. Ajit Bhaduria (Ind) 53.38; 3. Muhammad Javed (Pak) 52.28.
- Hammer throw: 1. J S Waraich (Ind) 62.12; 2. Aqarab Abbas (Pak) 61.79; 3. Rajesh Bharadwaj (Ind) 61.36.
- Long jump: 1. T Benildas Fernando (SL) 7.42; 2. Banaras Khan (Pak) 7.38; 3. M B Sadasivi Vanath (Ind) 7.23.
- Women:**
- 100m hurdles: 1. MA Sriyani Kulawansa (SL) 13.73 (NMR); 2. K Geetha (Ind) 14.36; 3. Kamala B Siddi (Ind) 14.69.
- 400m: 1. K Saramma (Ind) 53.65; 2. Shiny Wilson (Ind) 54.12; 3. Jayamani Illeperuma (SL) 54.58.
- High jump: 1. Bobby Aloysius (Ind) 1.71; 2. Angela Lincy (Ind) 1.71; 3. M Harshini Hiripitiya (SL) 1.65.

Hosts' hopes take back seat

By Chandrashekhar Das

Football marked the long day's journey into the night for hosts Bangladesh in the Sixth SAF Games that have really shuffled off the tools in a streamlined series of disciplines and events.

Sadly, the members of the largest contingent of the meet who took the more naively patriotic people of the country for an emotional roller coaster-ride, have hardly any role in the myriad activities of expectation and achievement, going all around.

For want of better words it should be put as a conceptual stasis, that in a meet — the SAF Games to be precise — modelled after the Olympics, that we put such a monstrous load on football as a gold-winning discipline.

All the other ten disciplines paled in attention and prominence before probably the

most popular game in the world. Preparations, with certain reservations, were patchy and the tone of optimism prior to the meet was feeble, sans conviction.

Of course, incidents beyond the control of the authorities and originating solely from subjectivity, diluted the spirit, particularly in the track and field events.

Seasoned runners like Shah-uddin, Chowdhury, Shah Jalal Mobin and Mehdi Hassan decided not to return home after taking part in the world university meet in the US. Quick replacement was searched for and expectedly hopes, that at least for theory's sake, pinned on the older heads, had to be placed on newer ones.

Fortune has a way of waylaying men. Golam Ambia, army's enthusiastic runner who despite the powerful presence of

Shri Lanka's SSA Dissenayeke and others was tipped as an outside chance of home conditions before and appreciative partisan crowd. But as one immortal dramatist put it in his masterpiece, we defy augury. Golam Ambia caught jaundice, and when he came round the nerve, zest needed in events like the 100m dash, was just not there.

Yesterday, at the Mirpur Stadium, Ambia had his worst fears realised. While taking part in the heats for today's 100m final, the sprinter developed serious trouble in his leg and had to be carried off the field on a stretcher. Adieu, Ambia. Adieu athletics hopes, and adieu, SAF Games, too. Because it will be a travesty of a nomenclature to call the next competition, to be held Madras two years later, since Uzbekistan and Afghanistan — both Central Asian states — would make their entries in the south Indian city.

It is the high noon of the Games now, with almost all the track and field events either through or awaiting finalisation and Bangladesh just do not have any hopes worth one's while.

The dawn had a rather belying beginning.

An eighteen-year-old swimmer named Mizanur Rahman Qarar created a new SAF record on the first day of medal counting with a superb performance. With only a few more swimming events left, the gold winner of the 200m breast-stroke remains the very hope of adding another gold to Bangladesh's tally of six glittering gongs.

If hope is not the hope for the wrong thing, then there is still some room for optimism in shooting, the only discipline in which Bangladesh have shown any semblance of consistency in performance.

At one fell swoop, the shooters, notably Ateequr Rahman and Saiful Alam Chowdhury Rinki, sent hopes soaring on the first day of medal reckoning. Four golds, including two in individual events, were deposited and later Kazi Shahana Parveen, in tandem with Sabrina and Soma, brought another gold in the women's event.

The other local competitors, in the lesser disciplines like boxing, wrestling, judo and kabaddi, would do themselves unexpectedly proud if they were to pick up a few morsels of

India's fine tennis double

By Mir Ashafuz Zaman

India completed an expected double in the Sixth SAF Games table tennis tournament when their male paddlers clinched the team gold outplaying Pakistan at the Dhanmondi gymnasium yesterday.

Bangladesh bagged the bronze beating Nepal 3-0 in the best-of-five match rubber.

In the afternoon, S Raman gave his country a flying start when he played Asim Qureshi 2-1, 21-15, 21-15. Arup Basak also won in straight sets, but his tie against Bilal Yasin was comparatively a tough one. Basak won 21-16, 21-19. Chetan Baboor did not give Shahzad Wasim enough space and sealed the gold for India with a 21-11, 21-15 win.

In the third-fourth places decider, Kiran Shrestha set the pace when he won the first set 21-15 in his singles against former Bangladesh champion Nasimul Hassan Kochi. However, Kochi turned back strongly in the next set and drew level with a 21-15 victory in the second. The third set was a lopsided affair with Kochi pressing on right from the start

and forcing a 21-11 triumph to take the hosts one up.

Mosaddequl Haq Kochi, the balding national number one, made it two-nil in no time. The left-hander had his Nepalese rival Rajan Subba at the corner right from the word go and won 21-5, 21-9.

In the third singles, Rajendra Kapali almost turned the table on Saidul Haq Sadi, another veteran, snatching the first set 22-20 but Sadi stepped up his game in the next two sets and rounded off the rubber with a 20-22, 21-16, 21-8.

Zobera Rahman Linnu was the only host paddler in the fray as the women's singles reached the quarterfinals stage.

Eleven-times, national champion Linnu battled her way back from two sets down to dispose of Nepalese Sandhya Shakra 17-21, 12-21, 21-16, 21-14 and 21-12.

Linnu's teammates Zulekha Akhter and Ania Tarmin, however, had no such luck in their respective matches.

Zulekha bowed to Ghazala Roohi of Pakistan 21-9, 21-12, 21-15 while Tania put up a brave fight in the second set before being beaten by Naila Anjum, another Pakistani.

Two Sri Lankan girls — Deepika Subashini Rodrigo and Namal Manduja Gunasekera — also made it to the quarterfinals, winning in straight sets.

Rodrigo routed Bhutan's Kezang Yangden 21-6, 21-11, 21-6 while Gunasekera got the better of little Maldivian Naazly Ibrahim 21-8, 21-12 and 21-13.

Kanchan Dhawan joined fellow Indian Radhika Ambika in the last night when she defeated Juwairya Saeed of the Maldives 21-5, 21-7, 21-6. Ambika was directly placed in the quarterfinals.

Nepalese Jyotsna Shrestha completed the quorum with a 21-16, 21-11, 21-12 victory over Dekizam of Bhutan. In the doubles, Linnu and Zulekha advanced to the semifinals when the pair swamped Jyotsna Shrestha and Sandhya Shakra of Nepal 21-12, 21-8 in the quarterfinals. Linnu and Zulekha will take on the Indian duo of Dhawan and Ambika, who beat Asima Rafique and Shabnam Majid of Pakistan 21-11, 21-17

en route to the round of four.

The other semifinal pits Ritu Bhola and Arul Silvi, another Indian pairing, against Shri Lanka's Gunasekera and Rodrigo.

Bhola and Selvi smothered the Pakistani hopes of entering the medals round when they eased past Roohi and Anjum 21-16, 21-17.

Gunasekera and Rodrigo had to sweat a little in their quarterfinal encounter against the Maldives pair of Juwairya and Muna Ibrahim 21-14, 21-12.

The women's doubles are scheduled for today while the singles quarterfinals will be held on Sunday.

India have won the two TT gold medals offered so far. On Wednesday, the women's contingent took the team gold beating Shri Lanka in the final. Pakistan finished third, shattering the hosts' hopes of earning at least a bronze.

Volleyball results

Sports Reporter

Hosts Bangladesh and next-door neighbours India posted straight-sets victories in the sixth SAF Games men's volleyball championship at the Mirpur indoor stadium yesterday.

The local spikers, cheered on by the partisan crowd, downed the Nepalese squad 15-12, 15-11, 15-1 in one hour and 14 minutes.

The Indians needed only 46 minutes to demolish the Maldivians 15-2, 15-1, 15-1.

However, the match of the day was played between the Indian and Shri Lankan girls.

The Indian women started the match strongly and clinched the first set 15-9. But the Lankan spikers, spearheaded by Rohini Chandrika, Deepika Kumari and Ranuka Yapa, put up a brilliant fight in the next. With the 5,000-capacity crowd crying and clapping for every point, the Lankans rallied from 8-11 down to take the match to deuce. They were a point away from drawing level when they forced a 15-14 lead but the Indians kept their cool under pressure and with their captain Salomi Xavier and Sangeeta Kharwara, both strong players, up at the net spiking with power and pinpoint accuracy, won the next three points to wrap up the set.

Apart from Xavier and Kharwara, Hemalata Urohal and Jyotsna Gardi also played superbly.

The gruelling second set seemed to wear the lean and hungry looking Shri Lankans down and they were completely dominated by the stockily built Indians. The eventual winners won the third set without much sweat 15-9.

The enthralling encounter spanned one hour 20 minutes.

A belated gold

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh managed a pinch in the gold rush when the country's female shooters topped up a lone gold to the hosts' initial haul of five golds Tuesday.

Though a success, a raise in the tally, it was *viuxjeu*.

The women's Standard Rifle Prone 60 shots was actually held on Wednesday but the results were withheld for technical reasons.

The team gold went to Bangladesh while the gold in the individual event was captured by an Indian marks-woman.

The Bangladesh trio of Kazi Shahana Parveen, Farzana Hossain Shoma and Sabrina Sultana scored a record total of 1713. Shahana, the shooting ace from Narayanganj who won the first gold for Bangladesh in the fifth Games in Colombo, two years ago, managed 575 out of a maximum 600. Her teammate Farzana Shoma also finished on the same score but the experienced Shahana got the bronze, in individual consideration.

Sabrina Sultana's contribu-

tion was 563 points.

India's Roopa Unnikrishnan surpassed all other contestants in individual score. She collected a record 583 to take the gold.

The individual silver winner came from Shri Lanka. Sundetha Werakon got 577 out of 600 to line behind Roopa Unnikrishnan on the medals podium.

With Bangladesh snatching the gold in the team event, Shri Lanka copped the silver with a team score of 1706. While Werakon clipped in with a silver-winning individual effort of 577, Pushpamall Ramanayeke supplied 567 and Vijitha Samarakoon shot 562.

Roopa Unnikrishnan's aureate achievement of 583 was not good enough to ensure anything beyond the bronze for India as the other two — Kubelt Ganguly and Uma Panicker — could add only 568 and 548 individually.

Meanwhile, the men's 25m range Rapid Fire pistol began yesterday. Twelve shooters — three each from India, Shri Lanka, Pakistan and hosts Bangladesh are taking part in this event.



Saramma Kutty of India crosses the finish line ahead of her more illustrious compatriot Shiny Wilson in the women's 400m sprint of the Sixth SAF Games at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. Kutty won the gold with a time of 53.65 seconds. — Star photo

SAF Games wrestling on

Sports Reporter

Mizanur Rahman Khan was the only host wrestler to make it into the next round as the strong grapplers from Pakistan and India, quit expectedly, dominated the inaugural day's proceedings of the Sixth SAF Games wrestling competition at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium yesterday.