

BOA in total disarray

Who'll receive Dhaka Games flag?



AL MUSABIR SADI from Colombo

As the curtains on the 10th South Asian Games fall today, the strong contingent of Bangladesh officials will gather at the Sugathadasa Stadium to do one last ritual correctly after their innumerable questionable activities throughout the 11-day show of the biggest sports jamboree of the region.

The issue is pretty serious because someone has to receive the Games baton since Dhaka will be hosting the next edition of the meet.

But until now it was not confirmed who would take over the Games flag on behalf of Bangladesh. The host city mayor is the first choice and then a Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) official. However, it was learnt that BOA acting secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed was on his way to catch the concluding ceremony of the tradition goes.

Not only that, the local organising committee was sweating to know even on Sunday when the Bangladeshi cultural troupe would arrive. As Bangladesh host the next Games in two years, they are to perform in the closing ceremony of the tradition goes.

Besides, the BOA has yet to design and approve a logo for the 11th edition of the Games and present it at the closing ceremony, leading only to establish a total mismanagement that was embarrassingly evident in managerial skills both on and off the field.

But even after his mobile phone

was activated, it was difficult to get a call through to him.

Even funnier was the women's general manager Quamrunnahar Dana. She was mostly seen accompanying her relative, the only female physician -- a family planning expert whose knowledge about sports medicine is also questionable -- to find a place in the squad. There have been complaints of free mixing among the sportsmen and women in the hotel but Dana was more eager to fax reports to Bangladeshi news agencies or go shopping rather than keep a watch. Thankfully, there was no scandal in the end.

The managerial skills or the lack of it definitely deteriorated in the absence of Zafar Imam, the former secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) who died two years ago.

Love him or loath him, Imam, affectionately called Zafar bhai, was the father figure of sports in the country and his ability to deliver in any Games was unmatched.

Bangladesh contingent's general manager AK Sarker was without a cellphone for about a week after arrival, waiting for the 'company' (organising committee) to deliver him a free SIM card. Whenever he was approached for news about teams residing outside Colombo, like hockey or shooting, his repeated answers were: "I really do not know because I have yet to get a phone."

In a country ravaged by war, keeping contact with all the members of the team should have been his priority. Maybe, the cash-starved BOA had advised him not to waste 2,000 rupees (20 dollars) to buy a SIM card.

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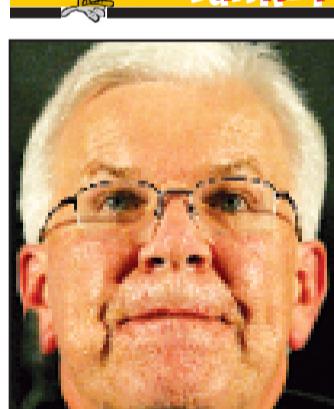
PHOTO: FOCUSBANGLA

SWEET GOLD: Mizanur Rahman of Bangladesh is delighted after receiving the gold medal that he won in taekwondo at the St. Joseph's College Indoor Complex in Colombo on Sunday.



Did U Know?

British golfer Nick Faldo holds the record for the most Ryder Cup match wins. He's won 23 of his 46 matches.



Malcolm Speed

(ICC chief executive)

"I was shocked. I thought it was a silly letter."

On his reaction to Darrell Hair's letter offering to quit for 500,000 dollars.



ESPN

English Premier Football League

Middlesbrough v Portsmouth

Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)

STAR Sports

Primera Liga

Celta Vigo v Barcelona

Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)

F'gan power past Victoria

UNB, Dhaka

Farashganj Sporting Club continued their winning run as they registered their second successive victory in the Green Delta Insurance First Division Hockey League when they beat Victoria Sporting Club 3-0 at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The winners led the first-half by

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CHAMPIONS TROPHY



SPORTS REPORTER

Mehrab Hossain was rewarded for his recent string of good form as the national selectors picked the young prospect in the 18-member preliminary squad for the ICC Champions Trophy to be held in India in October-November.

The left-handed top-order batsman and a very useful left-arm spinner was the only fresh inclusion in an otherwise unchanged squad from a list which was taken in the previous occasion.

Their preparations will start on Wednesday.

The Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel trimmed the squad from the 30-member probables which was announced on August 9.

The 19-year-old Mehrab, who is currently captaining the BCB Academy team in Pakistan, caught the eye during the Bangladesh A

team's tour to Zimbabwe last June and had been considered as one of the best future prospects for longer-version cricket.

"Yes, we believe that he is a very good player for the longer-version game but that doesn't mean he is not good enough for the shorter-version. We have lot of hard-hitting batsmen in the squad but we feel that we need a player like Mehrab who has the ability to play the anchor role in the top order," explained Faruque.

"He is basically an opener who can also bat in the middle-order. But if he finally gets the nod he will definitely be consider as an opener. The last two years' performance of the young batsman in different levels gave us the impression that he can represent the senior side for long," he added.

"It is a part of our continuous process to bring young guys in the senior side and two boys' (Forhad Reza and Sakib Al Hasan) performances in the last series made us courageous to do so," said an

excited Faruque.

Many might have thought that the inclusion of Mehrab was a message for veteran opener Javed Omar, who many believed is not suitable to open the innings in the one-day international when Bangladesh go for a win.

Faruque didn't say anything directly on this issue but said that they are looking for a proper combination before the World Cup.

"We don't want to write off any-body's career but the fact is that we are trying hard to get a right combination in the opening slot. You know that top-order is permanent headache for the team and we believe that once we get the right pair in the opening spot our maximum problem will be solved," he responded.

Faruque, however, was a little worried with the fitness of captain Habibul Bashar.

"This is really a worrying factor

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Pakistan clinch football gold

SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

A first-half strike by Adeel Ahmed helped Pakistan retain the football gold medal with a solitary goal win over Sri Lanka here late on Saturday night at the Sugathadasa Stadium.

Adeel separated the two sides two minutes before break to give Pakistan their fourth Games gold medal in football, after being successful in 1989, 1991 and 2004. They also became the most successful team in the region, topping India's record of three golds.

The hosts dominated the show, but a houseful holiday crowd went home in silence as their hopes to win the first-ever title was dashed shortly before midnight.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh men's volleyball team lost in straight sets (11-25, 15-25, 17-25) to Pakistan in the bronze medal play-off while India took gold, beating Sri Lanka 25-15, 21-25, 25-21, 25-19 in the final yesterday.

The hosts clinched the prestigious marathon gold, Ajith Bandara winning the 42km race in 2hrs25:40. Nepal's Arjun Kumar Basnet won silver and India's Binning bronze in the last athletics event.

Today, Bangladeshi karatekas will participate in all three karate events that bring end to this 11-day competition.



PHOTO: INTERNET

The winners led the first-half by

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Silly of Akber

SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

Eyebrows were raised as Bangladesh contingent's 10th SA Games Chef de Mission Maj Gen Akber Akter did not visit an ailing member of his team in hospital.

Judoka Ekramul Haque spent a night in hospital following a neck injury on Saturday but surprisingly, Akber, who is also the Bangladesh Judo Federation president, did not even bother to go and comfort the athlete.

Ekramul was injured during competition on Saturday but he was cleared of any danger only after a CT Scan and MRI before being released yesterday afternoon.

The incident only adds more woes to the official mismanagement that has been evident throughout the Games.

Mahalchhari on the right track

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagachhara

Mahalchhari scored in both halves to secure a 2-0 win over Matrianga in the DC Gold Cup football tournament at the Khagachhara Stadium yesterday.

Shahidul Islam scored the opening goal for the winners in the 35th

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Scappy win for Sylhet

Football

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Hosts Sylhet edged past Comilla by a single goal to mark a good start in the final round of the Jubob Phone National Football Championship at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.

Midfielder Robin scored the all-important goal in the 27th minute. The result ends the campaign for Comilla who drew their first match against Dhaka University 1-1.

Sylhet, on the other hand, need only a draw in their match against Dhaka University to confirm their spot in the semifinals of the competition.

The hosts were playing in front of a capacity crowd but failed to light up the place as they were well below par in their performance. A lack of method in the middle was evident and even though the result was in favour of the hosts, it didn't satisfy anyone.

Led by national skipper and star midfielder Arif Khan Joy and with three other national players, Sylhet

were not up to the mark. Comilla played more attractive football, but just like Tangail on Saturday, lacked the finishing touch up front. Sylhet only had a couple of chances in the match. Robin missed a golden opportunity in the 23rd minute when he latched on to a long ball from midfield. But he slammed the ball on to Comilla goalkeeper Monir's body.

Four minutes later, Robin made no mistake as he grabbed an incisive pass from Monir and slotted home the winner.

Comilla had only one chance five minutes after the lemon break but Sylhet goalie Sohel was brilliant as he saved a low drive from Jamal.

The hosts went on the defensive in the final quarter as they look to take on Dhaka University in their next match.

"We didn't play in the preliminary stages. This is why we looked so unsettled in the middle. I'm sure my boys will be back to their best against Dhaka University," said Sylhet coach Samir Dey.

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BCB calls up 7 for sixes

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a seven-member squad for the Asian Super Sixes Challenge to be held in Karachi from September 13 to 18.

Only opener Nazmus Sadat, who is now currently visiting with the BCB Academy side in Pakistan, was the new face in an otherwise star-studded squad.

The selectors considered the all-round ability of the players for the tourney except the newcomer. "You know that it is a competition for the all-rounders and that's why we considered the all-round ability before selecting the team. On the other hand, we believe that national players will be benefited by the tourney before the ICC Champions Trophy," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed.

Hosts Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka are the other teams in the competition.

SQUAD

Mohammad Rafique, Mashrafee Bin Mortaza, Aftab Ahmed, Manjul Islam, Sakib Al Hasan, Forhad Reza and Nazmus Sadat.

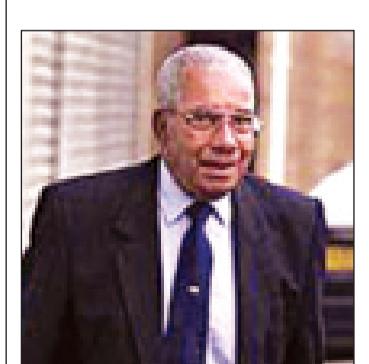
Walcott no more

AFP, London

West Indies cricket legend Sir Clyde Walcott died in a Barbados hospital on Saturday at the age of 80.

Walcott was one of the three Ws along with Sir Frank Worrell and Everton Weekes who shot to fame in the 1950s.

But he first made his mark in



SIR CLYDE LEOPOLD WALCOTT
1945-46 when, just 20 years old, he added an unbroken 574 for the fourth wicket with his schoolmate, Worrell, for Barbados against Trinidad at Port of Spain.

In 44 Tests Walcott hit 15 hundreds, and made 3,798 runs at an average of 56.68. His highest Test score was 220 against England in Bridgetown in 1954.

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