

Sajjad hits history

SPORTS REPORTER

Sajjad Hossain created a small piece of history when he became the first Bangladeshi archer to win a gold medal at an international tournament yesterday.

The unheralded archer from Chandpur defeated T Rangpur of Iran to clinch the individual recurve 70m gold in the 4th Asian Archery Grand Prix Championship at Salt Lake City in Kolkata. Bangladesh also clinched the silver medal in the team event in a sport that started a quiet journey in 2006.

Sajjad was four points clear of his heavyweight Iranian counterpart after scoring 105 out of a maximum 120 points from 12 attempts.

"I feel really happy to see the national flag flying at an international tournament and hear the national anthem," Sajjad told the Daily Star Sport over phone in his immediate reaction.

Sajjad was hundred per cent perfect in seven of his 12 shots that eventually earned him the gold.

Sajjad's confidence was sky high after he beat world champion Rahul Rajib of India in the quarterfinal, although he admitted that he hadn't expected such a result against the world champion archer.

"After beating Rahul Rajib, I started to believe that I could do something in the tournament and crossed the semifinal hurdle defeating Biswas

and then the dream came true in the final," said Sajjad.

The champion archer, however, said that he was confident of doing well in the tournament even before he left for Kolkata as he had good preparation at home where he shot highest 112 points.

Sajjad is optimistic that he would be able to carry his form into next year's South Asian (SA) Games at home.

The Bangladesh team

comprising Noor-e-Alam, Imdadul Haq Milon and Ziaul-Haq bagged silver in the team event with 209 points behind the Indian team that finished with 220 points.

Bangladesh's best success previously at an international archery tournament came in the 2006 SA Games in Colombo where Noor-e-Alam grabbed the individual silver medal and Bangladesh secured bronze in the same team event.



A file photo shows Sajjad Hossain in his stride at the outer stadium in Paltan during a national archery event.

Pakistan want to play India offshore

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan's cricket chief said Saturday he hopes his team will get to play arch-rivals India at a neutral venue in the future.

The International Cricket Council had to re-draft the Future Tour Programme (FTP) after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) complained of being marginalised in the post-2012 programme, having no series with India.

"We have received a fresh draft of the FTP which is two blocks of four years each, from 2012 to 2016 and to 2020," said PCB chairman Ijaz Butt. "In it we have Tests, one-dayers and Twenty20 matches with India."

The FTP, introduced in 2006, aims to provide a structured schedule of cricket for the 10 member countries.

And Butt said India have shown interest in playing at neutral venues.

"It is natural that governments of both countries will have to approve any cricket series but there have been efforts to revive Indo-Pak cricket and India has shown interest in playing on neutral venues," said Butt.

India refused to tour Pakistan amid heightened tension between Islamabad and New Delhi after the Mumbai attacks last year. India were supposed to tour Pakistan earlier this year.

"We need a busy FTP in order to survive and playing against India is the top priority, and that's why we demanded changes in the FTP," said Butt, adding that the FTP would be discussed at the ICC before being finalised.

Pakistan was stripped of its World Cup matches after a deadly attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore in March. The International Cricket Council relocated the matches to three other co-hosts -- India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Even before the attacks that killed eight people and left seven Sri Lankan players and

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Shakib attends school reunion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Bangladesh national cricket team's vice captain Shakib Al Hasan joined a reunion of his 2003 SSC batch followed by an Ifar Mahfil at the Magura press club yesterday.

Shakib, who in absence of injured captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, set an unprecedented record of leading the Tigers in the West Indies in both Test and ODI series whitewash and later won the ODI series against Zimbabwe, returned to his home town of Magura yesterday to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr after having medical treatment on his groin in Australia.

Shakib was greeted with a garland of flowers by his friends, fans, relatives, parents, journalists and cultural leaders as he arrived at the venue.

A discussion was also held at the occasion. Shahin Mahmud, Nayan Khan, Subrata Biswas and Sudip Biswas, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Sourav Irfan's role model

INTERNET, undated

Irfan Pathan is determined to make a comeback to the Indian team and he wants to take a leaf out of Sourav Ganguly's book to rise from the ashes.

"Sourav is my role model in terms making comebacks to the Indian team. I am confident that I will return to the Indian team soon," the left-arm seamer, who paid a visit to Siliguri on Friday, said. Pathan was there as one of the guests at Baghjatun Club organised a marathathon on the day.

The cricketer was dropped from the Indian team after the World Twenty20 in England. He is now practicing extra hard for the upcoming domestic season.

"My aim should be to get back to the team and cement my place, not just in the Twenty20 or ODI side but also in the Test team," Pathan said.



Pakistan captain Younus Khan is all smiles during a press conference in Johannesburg yesterday.

ODIs under microscope

The ICC gala starts in SA on Tuesday

AFP, Johannesburg

The one-day ICC Champions Trophy starts Tuesday in South Africa with the future of the 50-over format under the microscope.

World stars past and present and officials have joined a fierce debate as the overwhelming success of the Indian Premier League-led Twenty20 version has left many querying the role of the ODI in an overcrowded schedule.

Indian batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar favours a four-innings format of 25 overs each to minimise the advantage of winning the toss and former star Anil Kumble supports a reduction to 40 overs.

Others like Australian bowling legend Shane Warne want the ODI format scrapped, believing it has been rendered extinct by the spectator-friendly glitz and

glamour of Twenty20 cricket.

But ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat says reports of the death of ODI have been greatly exaggerated and the Champions Trophy tournament will trigger a rebirth of 50-over cricket.

"It reminds me of a year ago when people were talking about the death of Test cricket, with no crowds being there and so on," Lorgat told the South African media.

"I think we are running ahead of ourselves. We will see

at the Champions Trophy in South Africa that there is a place for the ODI format in international cricket."

Lorgat warned against obsessive tinkering, saying a glut of ODI fixtures rather than the format may be the biggest problem, a view backed by South Africa skipper Graeme Smith.

"From an innovations point of view, we are always looking for new, exciting things. The batting powerplay is a good example, but we do not want to do too many things too quickly."

After an 11-year identity crisis, Lorgat believes the ICC have discovered the right formula for the often-criticised Champions Trophy, which Warne has labelled a "joke".

Short and sharp are the buzzwords for a 14-day, 15-match ODI feast featuring the

Team	Wins	Losses
Australia	8	5
England	6	6
India	9	5
New Zealand	8	5
Pakistan	4	6
Sri Lanka	10	4
South Africa	9	5
West Indies	13	5

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

CT primed to glow

AFP, New Delhi

Thrilling contests will be the order of the day at the Champions Trophy, especially following a raging debate over the future of one-day cricket.

The 11-year-old tournament may have witnessed many nail-biting matches, but is still competing with the 50-over World Cup and Twenty20 World Championships for popularity and glamour.

Wisden described the 2006 edition -- held just five months before the World Cup -- as "the unwanted stepchild of international cricket", while Matthew Hayden recently suggested the tournament be scrapped.

"Playing the World Twenty20 every other year is too much. And why have the Champions Trophy when you've already got a 50-over World Cup?" former Australian batsman Hayden wrote in a newspaper column.

The biennial tournament, a brainchild of former International Cricket Council (ICC) chief Jagmohan Dalmiya, has already had more than its fair share of criticism since it was launched in 1998 in Dhaka.

The event was known as ICC Knock-Out at Dhaka and at Nairobi two years later, but its format left a lot to be desired as just one bad

match sent the favourites home, like Australia.

It was renamed the Champions Trophy and played on league-cum-knock-out basis, but the presence of weak sides robbed it of competitive flavour in the next two editions.

The Champions Trophy is more competitive now as only the top eight teams vie for the title, but the rise of Twenty20 has put the 50-over format under pressure.

Indian superstar Sachin Tendulkar and former Australian international Dean Jones suggested the 50-over format be revamped, while former captains Kapil Dev of India and Pakistan's Imran Khan were against it.

Tendulkar said the 50-over matches should be split into two innings of 25 overs each so that both the teams enjoy the same conditions.

"Today, we can tell the result of close to 75 per cent of matches after the toss. We know how the conditions will affect the two teams. But it (splitting the game) is not too dependent on the toss," said Tendulkar.

"For example, if it's a day-night match, then both the teams will have to bat under lights. The conditions change very dramatically, but this would ensure that it's the same for everyone."

Imran said the 50-over format should not be tinkered with.

"Every format of the sport has its own utility and charm and it is better not to try to change

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Hopes for a whitewash

Seventh Aus-Eng ODI today

Cricket

AFP, Durham

Australia all-rounder James Hopes admits the chance to become the first team to win a one-day series 7-0 will provide all the motivation his side need to crush England one more time on Sunday.

Ricky Ponting's team extended their winning run to six matches at Trent Bridge on Thursday when a century from rookie wicketkeeper-batsman Tim Paine helped them to a crushing 111-run victory.

While piling further misery on England's one-day troops -- skipper Andrew Strauss was booed by sections of the crowd after the loss -- Australia's success lifted them back to the top of the ICC's one-day international rankings.

Ponting's side must win again at Durham this weekend if they are to retain that status into next week's Champions Trophy and Hopes admits completing a whitewash is a scenario they would relish.

"We heard after the game that 7-0 has never been done before so that's a bit more of a motivation," Hopes said.

"We don't want to go to the Champions Trophy losing the last game before that."



Did U Know?

French Open tennis was opened up to the best foreign players in 1925.



Talk Turkey

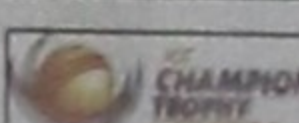


Jose Mourinho

(Inter Milan manager)
"Barcelona are the best team in Europe. They're not just the European champions because it's not always the case that the best team in Europe are European champions but they are and so we did really well."

Here they go again

AFP, New Delhi



The Champions Trophy is set to hail the comeback kings as Shane Bond, Rahul Dravid, Mohammad Asif and Ashish Nehra return from the international wilderness.

The quartet will be playing their first major one-day tournament after spending more than a year on the sidelines.

New Zealand paceman Bond has already shown in a couple of recent one-dayers in Sri Lanka that he had been sorely missed, rattling the home side with three wickets in his comeback match.

Injuries and a stint with unofficial Indian Cricket League (ICL) forced Bond out of action for more than two years before he returned for a tri-series in Sri Lanka -- only to prove he had not lost his sharpness.

"It's been a long time coming and it's something I never thought would happen again," Bond said ahead of the triangular series.

"It feels like I am starting all over again. I think I set myself pretty high standards and it's up to me to meet those. I

always strive to be the best bowler in the world, nothing's changed there."

Dravid, 36, was axed in favour of youngsters soon after Mahendra Singh Dhoni led a young side to the Twenty20 World Cup triumph in South Africa two years ago.

Nicknamed "The Wall" for his solid technique and sound temperament, Dravid has been the mainstay of India's batting for more than a decade, having scored more than 10,000 runs in one-day internationals.

The selectors felt the need of an experienced batsman in the middle order after some of the younger players looked vulnerable against short-pitched deliveries in the Twenty20 World Cup in England this year.

Dravid, who figured in a recent tri-series in Sri Lanka, said he had nothing to prove at this stage.

"I have never played my cricket that way, wanting to prove a point," Dravid said after being recalled in nearly two years.

"All I can say is that I will do my level best for the team's cause. I have always believed in preparing well before a

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

Niaz runner-up in Ravana chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Niaz Morshed became runner-up in the Ravana Challenge International Chess tournament in Colombo after beating IM Zozulia Anna of Belgium in the final and tenth round on Friday.

Niaz finished with seven points, half a point behind the eventual champion, Georgian GM Mchedlishvili Mikheil, said a press release from the chess federation yesterday.

In the penultimate round, Niaz beat Indian FM Sayantan Das and drew his eighth round match with Indian WGM Soumya.

Younus worry for Pakistan

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan's Champions Trophy campaign has suffered a setback as their captain Younus Khan suffered a minor fracture on his little finger during a training session on Friday.

"It's a little fracture. Nothing serious," he said. "We will assess it on Monday. Hopefully it should be alright." He still played in Pakistan's convincing victory over Sri Lanka in Friday's warm-up match Friday in Benoni.

Younis also said he was hurting from Pakistan's defeat to India in the 2003 World Cup, and wanted revenge when the teams face off next Saturday in Centurion.

"It hurts. I played that match. We scored 270 and still lost. A score of 250 in these conditions is considered safe," Younis said. "But the way Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag batted, and backed by Rahul Dravid and Yuvraj Singh, we were beaten."

"Indeed, we have lost to India in most of these ICC match-ups except only once (the 2004 Champion Trophy). Even we deserve to win now."

India have only one warm-up match, against New Zealand on Sunday, before taking on Pakistan but they enter the tournament on a high after winning the Compag Cup in Sri Lanka last week. Captain MS Dhoni

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8



What to WATCH

SUNDAY ESPN
English Premier League
Man United v Man City
Live from 7:25pm
Chelsea v Tottenham
Live from 9:55pm

STAR Sports
English Premier League
Everton v Blackburn
Live from 8:55pm

STAR Cricket
England v Australia
Seventh ODI
Live from 4:15pm

SuperSport3
Primera Liga
Real Madrid v Kerez
Live from 11:55pm

MONDAY
SuperSport3
Primera Liga
Valencia v Sporting
Live from 1:55am

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm

TUESDAY
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm
German FA Cup
Bayern Munich v Rott-Weiss
Live from 11:55pm

STAR Cricket
ICC Champions Trophy
South Africa v Sri Lanka
Live from 7:15pm

WEDNESDAY
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm

STAR Cricket
ICC Champions Trophy
Pakistan v West Indies
Live from 7:15pm

THURSDAY
ESPN
German FA Cup
FC Koln v VfL Wolfsburg
Live from 1:25am



2009 US Open ladies singles champion Kim Clijsters signs autographs for her fans on her return to native Bree in Belgium on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP