PHOTO: AFP

Indian dancers perform at the closing ceremony of the XIX Commonwealth Games at the Jawarharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi yesterday..

Adios New Delhi

AFP, *New Delhi*

The Commonwealth Games ended on Thursday after 11 days of fiery competition that went some way to mending the damage done to Indian pride and prestige tarnished by the chaotic buildup to the event.

The drama of the last of the 272 gold medals provided the perfect ending for the Indian hosts as poster girl Saina Nehwal saved a match point against Malaysia's Wong Mew Choo in winning the women's singles badminton title.

That was India's 38th gold, one clear of England and for the first time ensuring them second place in the Commonwealth Games medals table. Australia were runaway winners with 74 golds and a total of 176.

"This was the toughest match of my career," said Nehwal.

"I couldn't sleep and I had a lot of tension, which meant I did not always play at my best. All Indian players face that here, but for me I only get it in finals."

Wong had nearly beaten the Hyderabad heroine in the team event six days previously, and would have done so in straight games this time had Nehwal's kill at the net at 20-21 travelled a fraction further.

Instead it landed plumb on the baseline and soon afterwards India was celebrating.

Nehwal's win also eased Indian pain from earlier in the day when their men's hockey team crashed 8-0 to world champions Australia in a record loss.

Earlier, Kenya finished top nation in athletics by winning the men's and women's marathon races and New Zealand defended their netball title in a cliff-hanger over Australia.

With just the closing ceremony to go later in the evening, there was relief on the part of the organisers that the Games had gone off without a major security lapse, even if the precautions taken meant that events like the marathon and cycling road races took place in eery isolation.

But other issues remained to be put under the microscope, notably over the way that New Delhi staggered into the competition with filthy athletes' accomodation, crumbling infrastructure and health concerns.

Media covering the event were also incensed by a shambolic Games information system that left them struggling to gather even the most basic of news items.

The very future of the Commonwealth Games seemed to be on the line at times, 80 years after it first sprung into life as the British Empire Games.

Commonwealth Games chief Mike Fennell saluted Delhi 2010, but admitted that the creaking showpiece needs to rethink its timing and rebrand its image.

"Last year I gave a press conference here and I was asked if there was a Plan B. I said Plan B was Delhi and Delhi has performed," he said.

Despite his praise for the Games, Fennell admitted that the timing of the event, already being held in a jam-packed sports calendar and in a year which has already seen a Winter Olympics and football World Cup, needs to be reviewed.

"It's a challenge. We have to ensure that we attract the best athletes. For track and field, October is not the best month. Some are back at school and for many the season is over," he said.

"It's important to attract the best athletes and impress on them that it's important for the careers. We have to rebuild the brand ahead of Glasgow in 2014."

Kenya's marathon double through John Kelai and Irene Kosgei bore testimony to one country which did decide to send their top athletes.

The big and strong Kelai took control of the men's race with around 25 minutes to go when he made his move with a subtle increase in pace that took him away from the field.

"I'm so humbled to win here, it is an honour," said Kelai.

"This is for my country, the people, the coaches and officials. All of us are going to celebrate. When you can win at this level you know you have reached your peak."

In a race run in difficult circumstances with hot and humid weather, Kosgei was also crowned champion, claiming Kenya's first-ever Commonwealth Games women's marathon title.

But the day belonged to India who finished the Games in fitting style with Nehwal's emotional win.

CWG MEDALS TABLE

Country	G	S	B	Total
Australia	74	55	48	177
India	38	27	36	101
England	37	59	46	142
Canada	26	17	32	75
South Africa	12	11	10	33
Kenya	12	11	9	32
Malaysia	12	10	13	35
Singapore	11	11	9	31
Nigeria	11	10	14	35
Scotland	9	10	7	26
New Zealand	6	22	8	36
Cyprus	4	3	5	12
Northern Ireland	3	3	4	10
Samoa	3	0	1	4
Wales	2	7	10	19
Jamaica	2	4	1	7
Pakistan	2	1	2	5
Uganda	2	0	0	2
Bahamas	1	1	3	5
Sri Lanka	1	1	1	3
Nauru	1	1	0	2
Botswana	1	0	3	4
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	1	0	0	1
Cayman Islands	1	0	0	1
Trinidad & Tobago	0	4	2	6
Cameroon	0	2	4	6
Ghana	0	1	3	4
Namibia	0	1	2	3
Papua New Guinea	0	1	0	1
Seychelles	0	1	0	1
Isle of Man	0	0	2	2
Tonga	0	0	2	2
Mauritius	0	0	2	2
St. Lucia	0	0	1	1
Guyana	0	0	1	1
Bangladesh	0	0	1	1

Bangladeshis falter

ANISUR RAHMAN *from New Delhi*

After registering an unprecedented success in the South Asian Games on home soil early this year, Bangladesh set a target of winning two gold medals in the XIX Commonwealth Games. But at the end of 11 days of rigorous battles they return home empty handed, barring a bronze medal. Their dreams shattered due mainly to disappointing performance by the athletes.

This year's showing matched Bangladesh's position in the 2006 Melbourne Games when shooters Asif Hossain Khan and Abdullah Hel Baki brought the bronze for the nation in the 10m air rifle pair event.

Of the 36 Bangladeshi athletes, all focus was on shooter Sharmin Akhter Ratna, double gold winner in the SA Games and Commonwealth Shooting Championships, and youth Olympic gold medal-winning archer Emdadul Haq Milon despite the presence of more illustrious mate like Asif Hossain Khan, who himself won a gold medal in the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

But both the medal hopes disappointed through their performances as Ratna was outshone by Singaporean and Malaysian shooters for a seventh place finish in an eight-player field in the finals of the individual 10m air rifle event. Milon was eliminated from the pre-quarterfinals suffering a 4-2 defeat to England's Simon Terry, the fifth ranked archer in the recurve bow event of the Games.

Performance from SA Games silver medalist swimmer Shahjahan Ali Ronny, SA Games silver medalist weightlifter Monoranjan and boxer Suruz Bangali could only make their presence felt, but their efforts were not good enough to bring a medal for the nation.

Ronny qualified for the men's 50m breaststroke semifinals before finishing last among 16 semifinalists while Monoranjan could only improve his own performance compared to the SA Games performance. Following the elimination of the two SA Games gold medalists Abdur Rahim and Jewel Ahmed Jony in the first round, Suruz moved into the pre-quarterfinals before conceding a 9-1 defeat to eventual gold medalist of North Ireland.

Apart from them, the performance of sprinter Shamsunnahar Chumki, hurdler Sumita Rani, long-jumper Al Amin, high-jumper Sajib, swimmers Dolly Akhter, Mahfuza Khatun, Mahfuzur Rahman, weightlifters Bidyut Kumar, Mollah Sabira, Firoza Parveen, Fahima Akhter, Abdullah Al Mamun and 12 shooters were not just up to mark, but Bangladesh Chef de Mission Nurul Fazle Bulbul was more or less satisfied with the performance.

"Compared to our standard, the athletes have done better. Actually our national standard is not high enough to compete in a big event like the Commonwealth Games," said Bulbul on eve of the closing ceremony yesterday.

Team general manager Jobaidur Rahman Rana also believed the athletes performed well though Bangladesh's expectation was not fulfilled.

"We had set our sights on gold medals in shooting and archery, but it was realistically tough as the shooters shot their scores what they scored back home while others shot record scores," said Rana adding that Bangladesh needed sufficient coaching staff including physios, trainers in every discipline like cricket.

Bulbul believed Bangladesh could not go forward because of lack of long-term planning.

"What my realisation is that Bangladesh are in a backward position because there is no long-term, even mid-term planning. We only train for two or three months ahead of any meet," said the banker, adding that the sport arena was also divided like the national level and it harmed the develop of sports.

Bulbul, president of Bangladesh Handball Federation, informed that private banks, which are involved with the national federations, are thinking of providing monthly scholarship to the athletes to bring out the best from them. The banker, however, believed the government should come forward to assist the bankers' initiatives.

Superman Shakib!

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didn't raise the bat and encouraged us to score a century," said Shakib, who added that he was quite sure of his team being a genuine threat in sub-continent conditions.

Lifting his bat was one of many things he had to perform on Thursday and of them, the most crucial was bowling the 49th over of the New Zealand innings when 24 runs were required.

"I was a bit nervous when I was hit for the boundary but then again I knew we could still stop them," he said.

Shakib made a lot of changes that weren't conventional but it was effective. Mainly, it was his decision to give Abdur Razzak the new-ball ahead of Rubel Hossain that could have backfired, but ultimately both bowlers took wickets when it mattered.

"I always knew that Rubel would bowl well with the old ball as he had done that before. So I decided that we give Raj bhai the new ball," he explained.

Throughout his explanations in the media conference that was interrupted with a five-minute long power-cut, Shakib's rasping voice showed how tired it must have been for the 23-year-old captain.

It was demanding on the body, to say the least: 157 minutes of batting and three hours of fielding, bowling and testing captaincy in the extreme, unseasonal heat of Dhaka.

Shakib proved in the grandest manner possible that he is indeed the most complete all-rounder in present day cricket.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fourth one-day international between Bangladesh and New Zealand at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday:

BANGLADESH

Kayes c B McCullum b Vettori	37
Nafees c B McCullum b Mills	0
Zunaed c Redmond b Mills	17
Rokibul b Bennett	6
Shakib c and b Vettori	106
Mushfiqur run out	13
Mahmudullah b Bennett	37
Shuvo c Williamson b Tuffey	8
Razzak c Vettori b Tuffey	7
Shafiul c B McCullum b Bennett	1
Rubel not out	0
Extras: (lb-2, nb-1, w-6)	9
Total: (All out in 48.1 overs)	241

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-27, 3-44, 4-97, 5-148, 6-216, 7-232, 8-239, 9-241

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mills	6	0	38	2
Tuffey	6.1	0	31	2
Bennett	8	0	44	3
Vettori	10	0	35	2
N McCullum	10	0	47	0
Williamson	2	0	15	0
Elliott	6	0	29	0

NEW ZEALAND

B McCullum c and b Shafiul	21
Watling lbw b Razzak	6
Redmond lbw b Shakib	16
Taylor c Shafiul b Shuvo	3
Williamson c Rokibul b Shafiul	108
Vettori c Shuvo b Mahmudullah	8
Elliott c Razzak b Shakib	22
Mills c Kayes b Rubel	8
N McCullum run out	33
Tuffey c Shuvo b Shakib	0
Bennett not out	0
Extras: (lb-4, w-3)	7
Total: (All out in 49.3 overs)	232

Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-32, 3-35, 4-68, 5-80, 6-150, 7-172, 8-225, 9-225, 10-232.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shafiul	7.3	0	39	2
Razzak	10	0	41	1
Shuvo	10	0	47	1
Shakib	10	0	54	3
Mahmudullah	2	0	5	1
Rubel	10	0	42	1

Result: Bangladesh won by nine runs and led five-match series 3-0.

Man-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan.

TEST RANKINGS

Sachin regains top position

PTI, *Dubai*

Sachin Tendukar has reclaimed the number one position in the Test rankings after eight years, following his successful run in the just concluded Test series against Australia.

Tendulkar was the highest run-getter with 403 runs in the two-match series, which India won 2-0.

Tendulkar also scored his sixth double hundred and was adjudged man-of-the-series.

The Indian batting legend has now 891 rating points, according to the latest ICC rankings list

Virender Sehwag is the next best Indian at number three with 819 points, behind Sri Lankan Kumar Sangakkara (874).

It is the first time in eight years that Tendulkar has topped the batting table. The last time he achieved the number one rank was in August 2002 when he scored 193 in his 99th Test to help India beat England by an innings and 46 runs at Headingley.

Aus, India arrive in Kochi

PTI, *Kochi*

On a high after winning the Tests 2-0, members of the Indian squad arrived here on Thursday for the first match of the ODI series against Australia on October 17.

The entire Australian team along with nine members of the Indian side, including the captains Michael Clarke and Mahendra Singh Dhoni, arrived by a chartered flight.

I'm under

FROM PAGE 20

players up their sleeves.

"Shakib has been outstanding in this series and he has led them exceptionally well and we just haven't adopted when put under pressure with the bat.

"I think they know the conditions well; I am pretty sure they got a lot of home games and got a great crowd support. The crowd was fantastic today even though we are on the losing side," said Vettori.

He also paid tribute to Kane Williamson who struck a maiden century in only his fifth game as a Black Cap.

"We have to take a lot of lessons from the way Kane played today, he was amazing and lot of our batsmen, lot of our more experienced batsmen can really take some in from him today," said Vettori in a calm tone but it would certainly put the message across to his misfiring batsmen.

The 31-year-old wasn't too concerned whatsoever that Williamson's selection only in the fourth game would be termed a mistake.

"It always looks big when someone gets a hundred. I think we backed our selections early on. It's not the right way of looking at it, we should just celebrate that," he said.

Pakistan pleased

AFP, *Karachi*

Pakistan's one-day captain Shahid Afridi and coach Waqar Younis on Wednesday welcomed a decision to clear the team of some spot-fixing claims levelled against them in England last month.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday ruled there was no evidence of corruption in the third one-day international between Pakistan and England at the Oval played on September 17.

Hockey gold Aussies'

AFP, *New Delhi*

Luke Doerner and Jason Wilon slammed two goals each as power-packed Australia wiped out India 8-0 to win their fourth successive Commonwealth Games men's field hockey gold here on Thursday.

The world champions dominated the home team right through the lop-sided final played before a packed crowd at the sun-baked Major Dhyan Chand stadium.

The Aussies have now finished on top in each edition of the Games since the sport was introduced in Kuala Lumpur in 1998.

The victory also completed an unprecedented hattrick of winning the World Cup, Champions Trophy and Commonwealth gold in the same year for Ric Charlesworth's men.

Also, it was the second time in a year that Australia crowned themselves with glory here, after having won the World Cup at the same venue in March.

Australian captain Jamie Dwyer said the conditions played a big part in the final outcome of the match.

"They had not played in this heat before in the tournament," he said. "They played all their games in the evening when it is at least cooler by 15 degrees. I think that made a huge difference.

"The match was probably closer than the scoreline reflects. We are thrilled to go home with the gold in our kitty."

For the Indians, who have not won a major tournament since their Asian Games gold in 1998, it was their first podium finish in the Games.

While the Aussies hugged each other in joy, the sombre Indian players went on a lap of the ground to show their gratitude to the patient crowd with a banner reading "Thank you all for your kind support".

Doerner finished the tournament as the highest scorer with eight goals.

The first-half saw a keen tussle between the teams to control the ball but it was the Aussies who surged into the lead in the 19th minute with Jason Wilson hammering one in from the left of the box.

The Aussies made it 2-0 two minutes later through Chris Ciriello before Wilson scored his second goal and Doerner slammed in his double in the 34th and 52nd minutes.

Simon Orchard made it 6-0 while Dwyer and Glenn Turner also joined in the goal-fest to cap a miserable outing for the hosts, ranked number nine in the world.

The Indians seemed to have no answers to the Australian assault and hardly threatened their defence.

"We played the first 15 minutes well but after that they struck two goals and we came under pressure," said India's Arjun Halappa. "We started making one mistake after another. Our finishing was also poor.

"They never allowed us to come back into the match."

In the other match of the day, New Zealand bagged the bronze after upsetting world number four England 5-3 on penalties.

Shea McAleese scored the winner while Adam Dixon missed his effort after the game was forced into the tie-breaker following a 3-3 deadlock at the end of extra-time in a fiercely-contested game.

Ace forward Simon Mantell scored all the three goals for England.

Dean Couzins, Nick Haig and Hayden Shaw scored for New Zealand, silver medallists at the 2002 Manchester Games.

Tamim Wisden

FROM PAGE 17

Sehwag into third.

The accolade completes a remarkable double success for Bangladesh which has now produced successive the Wisden Cricketer's Test Players-of-the-Year, with former captain Shakib Al Hasan taking the award in 2009.

For the record, Tamim scored 837 runs at 59.78 in seven Tests during 2010, despite his team failing to win a single Test during the year.

The citation in the November issue of the Wisden Cricketer reads: "Batting with a bulldozer mentality that drew rightful comparisons with the mighty Virender Sehwag, Tamim took the attitude that all bowlers were there to be destroyed, irrespective of method or reputation.

"Though his highest score of 151 came against India at Dhaka back in January, his finest performances were reserved for an England attack that put all other opponents in their pockets during a remarkable and unbeaten 18 months."

TOP FIVE PLAYERS

Player	Points
Tamim Iqbal	7.43
Graeme Swann	7.42
Virender Sehwag	7.40
Simon Katich	7.39
Dale Steyn	7.38

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

ACROSS

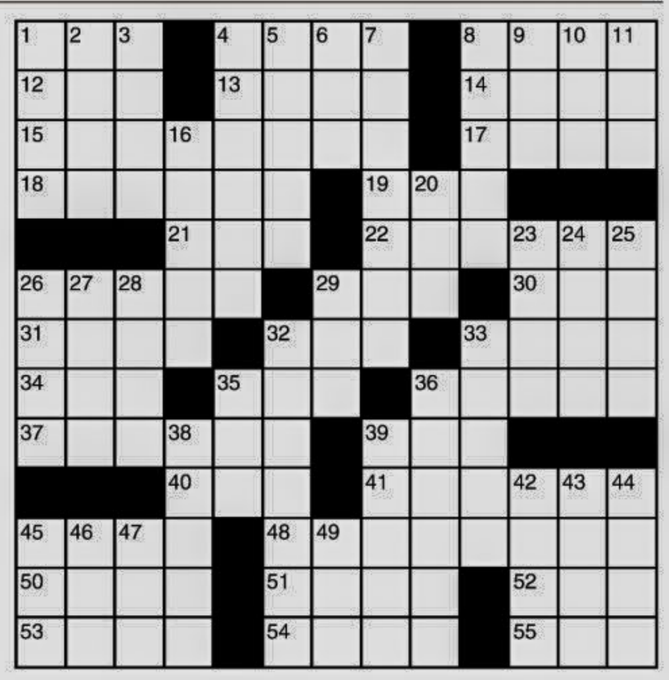
1 Actor Kilmer
4 Clay-rich soil
8 Picture of health?
12 Ostrich's cousin
13 Arm bone
14 100 cents
15 Paper
17 "Where have you —?"
18 With hands on hips
19 Expert
21 It may be faux
22 Tame
26 Go in
29 Megan or Michael J.
30 Has permission
31 Incite
32 White wine aperitif
33 Nephrite
34 Every iota
35 Slight touch
36 Exhaust pipe output
37 Museum tour guide
39 Spacecraft compartment
40 Comic Leno
41 Pass by
45 Lotion additive
48 Longshoreman
50 Harmony
51 Levin and Gershwin
52 Journal
53 Nuisance
54 Say it isn't so
55 Ram's mate

DOWN

1 Sacred Hindu text
2 Uncontrollable
3 1960s White House daughter
4 Of the lower back
5 Bread spreads
6 Massachusetts cape
7 Corrida VIP
8 Mediterranean three-master
9 Regret
10 100 square meters
11 Thither
16 Called balls and strikes
20 "Friends" cast member
23 Mosque bigwig
24 Do 48-Across' job
25 Spud's buds
26 "Zounds!"
27 — contendere
28 Body powder
29 Mini-whopper
32 Shrill grasshopper
33 Actor Friedlander
35 "CSI" find
36 Sociable
38 Oust
39 Hickory nut
42 Wan
43 Winter forecast
44 Advantage
45 Venomous viper
46 Caustic solution
47 Switch positions
49 Tramcar contents

Solution time: 25 mins.

B	U	D	S		A	L	A	S		G	E	L
A	T	I	T		B	E	N	T		A	G	O
N	A	M	E	P	L	A	T	E		M	O	P
S	H	E	R	R	Y			R	E	E	S	E
			N	O		J	O	N	A	S		
J	U	D	O		M	A	O		T	H	U	G
U	S	A			I	M	P			O	R	E
T	E	M	P		L	E	S		S	W	I	M
		E	A	V	E	S		B	E			
A	R	E	N	A			F	I	E	S	T	A
L	E	D		L	A	M	E	B	R	A	I	N
B	E	N		V	I	O	L		E	K	E	D
A	K	A		E	D	I	T		D	I	D	I



CRYPTOQUIP

A V I T K H W A K Z W Z B W A E L J R S J R B M T W V X M E H K M X Z M R A X K H ' B O M B X R A E O K E M S U: " I U M H X L R O O E W W A. "

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE THAT LION'S NECK HAIR EMITS NO SMELL AT ALL, I RECKON HE HASN'T A SCENT TO HIS MANE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals O