

## Four more bronze for hosts in archery

SPORTS REPORTER

After being eliminated from all individual events on the previous day, Bangladesh have raised a hope of clinching a gold medal as the boys' team moved to the recurve bow final in the first-ever Asian Youth Archery Championship at the BKSP ground yesterday.

The boys' team comprising Milon, Sajib and Sujon beat Malaysia 213-198 to set up the final clash against India, who beat Iraq in the other semi.

The hosts, however, won four bronze medals yesterday, one in the youth championship and three in the 3rd Asian Grand Prix.

The girls' team comprising Farjana, Shamoli and Fatema defeated Iraq 178-138 to win bronze medal in girls' recurve bow event while the mixed team beat Kazakhstan 133-129 to win bronze.

In recurve bow events of the Grand Prix, Bangladesh's women's team beat Malaysia 202-190 and the mixed team beat Chinese Taipei 141-140 to win bronze but men's team went down 220-205 against India to finish fourth.



Li Na is ecstatic after becoming the first Chinese woman to reach the French Open quarterfinals at Roland Garros in Paris yesterday. Li Na defeated Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova in the fourth round 2-6, 6-1, 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP

## All talk but little action



Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president AHM Mustafa Kamal met with numerous former national captains and incumbent Shakib Al Hasan yesterday to share views about improvement of cricket standard of the country.

The common view in the marathon meeting was that the structure of domestic cricket should improve, especially first-class cricket, if Bangladesh are to reach a certain level in world cricket.

"I met with them because I want to involve the former cricketers with the board activities as much as possible. I shared views with them because I have some planning and a mission to take the sport to a certain level," said Kamal after his meeting.

"Because of the World Cup, I couldn't give my full attention on this issue as it was also a big challenge for us, but we must now concentrate on our domestic structure if we want to improve our game. We mainly focused on our first-class competition in the discussion," said the BCB boss, adding that they have a plan to make a dedicated ground for each major competition and that they would start their new development work from Rajshahi.

The brainstorming session was attended by former national captains Roquibul Hasan, Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Akram Khan, Minhajul Abedin, Naimur Rahman, Khaled Mahmud, Khaled Mashud, Habibul Bashar, Mohammad Ashraful and the current skipper Shakib.

Among the elite players who know the game better than anybody else in the country, Naimur Rahman made a very interesting observation after the meeting.

"Without any doubt, it's a good initiative from the BCB president (AHM Mustafa Kamal). Lot of things came into the discussion. But the reality is that we have been discussing these issues for a long time, so there is nothing new. We have to implement it which is the main challenge," said skipper Naimur, who is known for his cut-throat approach.

Understandably it's good initiative from the BCB boss. But the reality is that Mr Kamal is certainly not the first person to have realized that our improvement in Test cricket hinges on a strong platform of our first-class cricket. It has been discussed time and again over the years but the main problem is with the implementation of those ideas.

Before the start of a new domestic season, the authority concerned always promises a lot but things have yet

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## Li first Chinese in qtrs

AP, Paris



Maybe Li Na's husband should have left the stadium earlier.

The sixth-seeded Li was trailing 3-0 in the third set Monday at the French Open when Jiang Shan, who is also her former coach, left Court Philippe Chatrier. The Australian Open runner-up then won the final six games to advance to the quarterfinals with a 2-6, 6-1, 6-3 victory over No. 9 Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic.

"I don't know what happened. Maybe it's just my husband left and I was able to win six games in a row," joked Li, who became the first Chinese player to reach the quarterfinals at Roland Garros.

After falling in the Australian Open final to Kim Clijsters, Li lost four consecutive matches and decided it was time to stop the slide.

She started working with new coach Michael Mortensen in April

before the Madrid Open, and their collaboration immediately paid off as she reached the semifinals in the Spanish capital.

Li said she needed a break from her husband both on and off the court after three years of working together.

"Of course I was tired," she said. "And also after Melbourne I didn't do well. So I needed to change the team a little bit to improve a lot. That's why I asked for Michael. He's from Denmark. I ask him to help me, and now the husband is (my) hitting partner."

Li tried not to hurt her husband when she told him their collaboration was over and said she didn't use the word "fired."

"I would never say that," she said. "I mean, it's tough. ... So I tried to never say, 'I fire you.'"

Li has now reached the quarterfinals at all four major tournaments and will next play either fourth-seeded Victoria Azarenka or Ekaterina Makarova.

Kvitova broke the sixth-seeded Li twice in the opening set Monday, but

the ninth-seeded Czech dropped serve twice in the second set as Li won five games in a row to even the score.

Li lost her serve in the second game of the final set when she double-faulted, but Kvitova failed to extend her lead as the Czech player lost the final six games of the match.

"I was really in trouble," Li said about her difficult start to the third set. "I didn't believe I could come back, because she has a huge, big serve. But I was OK. She had just broken once."

Kvitova was also looking for her first quarterfinal appearance on the Parisian clay.

Although Li doesn't like to play on clay, she is confident she can reach the same level she had at the Australian Open or even better and believes in her chances to go deeper in the draw.

Three other Asian women have reached the quarterfinals at Roland Garros in the Open era: Kazuko Sawamatsu and Kimiko Date-Krumm of Japan, and Kazakh player Yaroslava Shvedova.

## Sheikh Jamal on top

SPORTS REPORTER



A brace from Nigerian striker Emmanuel Ayuk powered star-studded Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club to a 4-0 victory over visitors Chittagong Mohammedan SC in the Grameenphone Bangladesh League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Apart from the Ayuk brace, defender Mohammad Sujon and substitute Zahid Hassan Emily netted one each in a one-sided affair where Sheikh Jamal took a 2-0 lead in the first half.

The 12th win in 18 matches pushed Sheikh Jamal to the top of the 12-team table with 41 points, two clear of overnight leaders Mukti Joddha Sangsad, who have a game in hand.

"After a disappointing draw against Feni Soccer Club, it was pleasing to win the game convincingly which takes us to the top of the table. However, we have four crucial games (against

Brothers, Rahmatganj, Dhaka Mohammedan and Sheikh Russel) coming up which we are looking forward to winning," said Sheikh Jamal coach Packer Ali after the game.

The win for Sheikh makes the already-open title race further competitive with four teams, namely Sheikh Jamal, Mukti Joddha, holders Abahani (35 points from 16 matches) and Sheikh Russel (38 points from 17 matches) very much in the hunt for the title of the fourth edition.

However, Mukti Joddha Sangsad are in a relatively better position as they have comparatively easier opponents to face up next: Chittagong Abahani, Farashganj, Chittagong Mohammedan, and Rahmatganj, apart from the match against Dhaka Abahani which will be held tomorrow.

On the other hand, Chittagong Mohammedan are in threat of relegation after their 11th defeat that left them at second from bottom with only

13 points from 18 matches, just one point behind Independent Cup champions Farashganj and Feni Soccer Club.

"We are hopeful about avoiding relegation as we have some matches to play at home ground," said Mohammedan coach Abu Sarwar.

Back to the match, Sheikh Jamal got off to a sparkling start against a side whom they beat 2-0 in the first leg and opened the account on the eighth minute when defender Sujon rose high to nod in a Feni Orunnimi corner from the right.

Three minutes later, Sheikh Jamal came close to doubling the lead but Mohammedan keeper Abu Talab frustrated them with a spectacular one-handed save off a Stephan Loga Bouga effort. Four minutes later, striker Enamul Haque, playing after five games, rattled the crossbar with a powerful left-footer.

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## School cricket's 1st semi today

SPORTS REPORTER

Faridpur Muslim Mission take on Donovan Secondary School of Patuakhali at the Madaripur Stadium today in the first semifinal of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School competition.

In the second semifinal on Friday, Chittagong Police Institution face Pabna Zilla School at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

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## GP Open squash

SPORTS REPORTER

William Mather emerged champion in division A of Grameenphone Open Squash beating Mohit Chowhan in the final at the Dhaka Club Squash Court yesterday.

Mather of American Club defeated Mohit of Dhaka Club by 11-7, 11-11, 11-6, 11-4 points.

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## Badminton's foreign foray Div I League from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Foreign shuttlers are expected to be the deciding factor in the title race for the Auto Museum First Division Badminton League which gets underway at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium today.

Each of the eight participating teams have secured at least one foreign, mostly from India and Malaysia, as the new rules have allowed teams to field one of two registered foreign players in a match.

"So far 14 to 15 players have already arrived here to compete for different teams as we have allowed foreign players in a bid to improving the performance of our local players," said Zahidul Haq Kochi, acting general secretary of Bangladesh Badminton Federation (BBF), at a press conference at the National Sports Council conference room yesterday.

Among the teams participating, Knit Concern have roped in Malaysian national players Ian Chun Seang and Chiang Jiann Shiang for men's team and Stefani and Emelia for women's team. They have also signed national champion Enayet Ullah and Shapla Khatun to bolster their championship bid. Pacific Associates Badminton Club have brought in Malaysian shuttler Yogendran Krishnan.

Kochi informed that the champion teams in both men's and women's group would be awarded Tk one lakh each

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## Ireland 238 for eight

AFP, Belfast

Paul Stirling's third one-day international hundred was the centrepiece of Ireland's 238 for eight against Pakistan in the second and final match of their series at Stormont here Monday.

Ireland, skittled out for 96 during Pakistan's seven-wicket win in Saturday's series opener, were on course for a substantial total while the 20-year-old Stirling was at the crease.

The batsman, who plays for English county Middlesex made 109 off just 107 balls with four sixes and seven fours.

But when he was fourth out for 182 at the start of the 44th over, Ireland failed to kick-on.

The hosts lost momentum during the one rain interruption in the innings, after 37 overs, with Ireland on 159 for two.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**IRELAND:** 238 for 8 (Joyce 17, Stirling 109, Cusack 26, Wilson 33; Junaid 2-53, Ajmal 4-35)



PHOTO: STAR

Sheikh Jamal striker Emmanuel Ayuk takes a joy ride after scoring one of his two goals against Chittagong Mohammedan SC in the Grameenphone Bangladesh League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.