

# SPORT

I didn't play safe at all this week. It will help me for my future. After winning Brunei in (2010) I was really hungry to win more tournaments but it didn't happen. However, I still remained confident and I told myself that a big victory is coming my way. That big victory happened today. This is the best week of my life.

I think golf is getting bigger in Bangladesh. I have a lot of fans on Facebook and I received a lot of messages from my fans. I think my win will really impact golf in Bangladesh and in Asia.



PHOTO: ASIANTOUR.COM

THE HERO OF HEROES: The proud Siddikur Rahman with his prized possession at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday.

## LONG-TERM CAMP BOA picks final 26

SPORTS REPORTER

Top shooter Sharmin Akhter Ratna has finally been included as the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) yesterday picked the final 26 athletes from five disciplines for a long-term training camp for next year's Commonwealth Games in Scotland and Asian Games in Korea.

However, Rabbi Hasan, the gold medalist shooter of the Bangladesh Games, has been dropped again due to his poor practice performances while one additional athlete each from archery and boxing has been included.

The BOA Training and Development Committee has sent the final list and the estimated budget of Tk 2 crore to its president and army chief Gen Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan for the final approval.

The athletes are Abdullah Hel Baki, Mahmudul Hasan, Shuvon Chowdhury, Jesmuzzaman, Sharmin Akhter of Kushtia, Sharmin Akhter of BKSP, Sharmin Akhter Ratna and Sadia Sultana (shooting), Emdadul Haque Milon, Roman Sana Sujan, Sheikh Sajib, Prennoy Murang, Mathui Pru Marma, Beauty Roy and Shamoli Roy (archery), Mahfizur Rahman, Shahjahan Ali, Mahfuz Akhter Shila and Nazma Khatun (swimming), Shraboni Biswas, Shahnaz Khatun, Beauty and Zahidul Hasan (taekwondo), Al Amin, Sur Krishna Chakma and Arif Hossain (boxing).

## 2-match ban on Obuya

AFP, Nairobi

Kenya cricket captain Collins Obuya will miss the two warm-up matches for the upcoming ICC World Twenty20 qualifying tournament after being suspended for assaulting a fellow player, officials reported on Saturday.

Obuya, a star of Kenya's 2003 World Cup semifinal success, was involved in an altercation with team-mate Irfan Karim during a recent tour of Sri Lanka.

Karim, an opening batsman was also handed a one-match suspension by the Cricket Kenya disciplinary committee which met on Friday to deliberate on the case.

# Siddikur keeps his head

## Lifts Hero Indian Open to end three-year jinx on Asian Tour

SPORTS REPORTER



Siddikur Rahman ended his three-year title drought on the Asian Tour by clinching a one-stroke victory in dramatic fashion at the Hero 50th Indian Open yesterday.

The 29-year-old golfer from Madaripur played an uncharacteristically low 75 in a nerve-wrecking last round at the Delhi Golf Club, yet emerged victorious by the scruff of the neck, thanks to some impeccable golf that he had played in the previous three rounds.

The win at India's most prestigious and one of the most lucrative events on the Asian Tour earned Siddikur a pay cheque of 225,000 dollars, propped him up to third position from nine in the Asian Tour Order of Merit and most importantly, ended a barren run in the circuit, which stretches

back to October 2010 when he won his first Tour title in Brunei Open.

Siddikur began the last day at 17-under 199, with a healthy lead of four strokes over nearest contender SSP Chowrasia of India, and two others who were a further shot behind.

And when the tenacious Bangladeshi birdied in the second and fifth holes, it looked like he was on his way for another under-par round after having racked up 66, 66, and 65 in the previous three rounds. The two birdies gave Siddikur a six-shot lead at 19-under, and it seemed like he would cruise to victory in the 1.25-million-dollar event.

But strange things have happened in golf in the past and greater golfers have been known to crumble with victory in sight. Siddikur himself have been a victim of last-day nerves a number of times in the past – most notoriously throwing away two-

strokes lead twice in this same golf course over the last two years.

The man, who had looked all calm and composed in the three previous rounds and had only had two bogeys, suddenly started missing the target. His hot putter, which had been a constant feature in his game in the last three days, suddenly deserted him. Siddikur carded four bogeys in the next six holes, allowing the chasing pack to breathe down his neck and sending his millions of fans around the world towards a nerve-jangling ride. Birdies on the 13 and 14 seemed to steady the ship a bit, but a calamitous triple bogey seven on 15, courtesy of a

wayward tee-shot which landed right in the middle of a bush, and another bogey on 16 ensured a dramatic and nervy finish. But on the par-three 17th hole, Siddikur nailed which was arguably the most important birdie of his tournament, from 15 feet. That birdie regained him the one-shot advantage over his rivals. There was time yet for more drama as Chowrasia, one shot behind Siddikur at that stage, got to a position of forcing a play-off with a possible birdie on the 18th. But the three-time Asian Tour winner incredibly missed the five-foot putter, leaving Siddikur with a simple two-foot tap-in for an outright victory.

With the monkey off his back, this victory would serve as a huge boost for Bangladesh's best golfer before he embarks on the ISPS HANDA World Cup of Golf in Australia on November 21 to fly the national flag once more.

Four round scores	(66, 66, 65, 75)
Aggregate score	14-under (274)
Total earnings this season	449,167 dollars
Position in Asian Tour Order of Merit	3rd

# Record foreigners in DPL

NAIMUL KARIM



The Dhaka Premier League (DPL) has so far seen 82 foreign cricketers register for the competition this year, which is half the number of Bangladeshi players playing and the most that the country's lone 50-over tournament has ever witnessed.

Organisers have described the rise in number of foreigners as an effect of the two major changes in the competition this year -- the newly-introduced players transfer system and the unavailability of Pakistani players.

The new transfer system, named as player-by-choice, gave each of the twelve clubs opportunities to buy their players on a turn-by-turn sys-

tem rather than the traditional scheme of the players negotiating directly with the clubs.

"Because of the new system the clubs could not form teams as per their own liking. So more focus was put on the foreign players' category," said Mohammedan's Wasim Khan.

Pakistani players have traditionally been more favoured by clubs in this competition; however, their non-availability this time -- due to an impasse between the two cricket boards -- led to clubs looking for players elsewhere. The problem that arose though was that the clubs did not get the same advantages.

"In order to replace the Pakistani players we had to bring others and their domestic schedules did not necessarily match ours, so most of them played just two to three games and then left. And that's why we had

to bring more players," said Abahani's IH Mallick.

With Pakistan situated nearby, the clubs traditionally had the liberty to sign contracts for longer periods with the players. It was an advantage used by a number of clubs this year with players from Sri Lanka who could return to play in the league after seeing off their own domestic engagements.

While an increase in the number of foreign players in a league generally points towards a more competitive stance, not many in Bangladesh share the same sentiments.

"If a club brings foreign players then their class should be similar to the likes of Mushfiqur [Rahim], Shakib [Al Hasan] or Tamim [Iqbal], so that we can learn, but that has not been the case," said former national captain Akram Khan.

While the league did see the likes of Angelo Mathews, Tillakaratne Dilshan or Brendan Taylor, majority of the others were either retired from or yet to play international cricket.

Despite the low-profile, many did perform well. The likes of Hamilton Masakadza and Sri Lanka's Roshane Silva have averaged over 80 with the bat. Afghanistan's Gulbadin Naib averages 75 with the bat and their national captain Mohammad Nabi too has performed well.

And that is an aspect that concerns many as well.

"The problem is that majority of the players are from Zimbabwe and Afghanistan and the next time these group of players play in our conditions it will be a disadvantage for us," said Akram.

# Roach, Pollard out of tour

INTERNET, Mumbai



West Indian pacer Kumar Roach has returned home to the Caribbean with a shoulder injury Shannon Gabriel has been announced as his replacement for the second Test against the West Indies which begins on November 14 in Mumbai.

The 25-year-old had missed the first Test in Kolkata because of the injury, and will miss the ODI series as well. Darren Sammy's boys are trailing 0-1 in the two-match Test series, after losing the first match at the Eden Gardens by an innings and 51 runs.

CJ Clark, the West Indian team's physiotherapist said, "Kumar has not made the expected recovery from the shoulder injury that kept him out of the first Test. He is returning to the Caribbean for ongoing management and subsequent physical rehabilitation," according to an ESPNcricinfo report.

In another setback, all-rounder Kieron Pollard too was ruled out of the limited-overs leg with an injury. Ravi Rampaul, Denesh Ramdin, Kieran Powell, Veerassamy Permaul and Narsingh Deonarine have been included in the squad. The three-match ODI series starts on November 21 in Kochi.



Mohammedan's Grand Masters (L-R) Niaz Murshed of Bangladesh, Russian Sergey Volkov and Tajik Amonatov Farrukh ponder their next moves against Gopalganj Chess Club players in the ninth and final round of the Premier Division Chess League at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Mohammedan's treble

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan Sporting Club emerged unbeaten champions to complete a treble in the Premier Division Chess League after beating Gopalganj Chess Club 4-0 in the ninth and final round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

Mohammedan earned maximum 16 match points from eight games to win the coveted title three times in a row.

It was Mohammedan's seventh overall appearance in the league who returned to the top-flight chess in 2011 after a long 15-year gap.

The Black and Whites also clinched the league title in their previous four appearances in 1977, 1981, 1995 and 1996 and the man behind those successes was Grand Master Niaz Murshed. And this time too it

was Niaz, along with Russian GM Sergey Volkov and GM Ziaur Rahman, who won their respective eight matches in a row, who played the key role for their overall seventh league title. Mohammedan's other Grand Master was Tajik GM Amonatov Farrukh.

"I was part of Mohammedan in the past. We tried our best this time too and I am happy to be part of the treble," said Niaz, the sub-continent's first GM, after the match.

Zia believed that they grew in confidence after beating Bangladesh Navy in the first round.

Both Niaz and Zia however were not happy with the present condition of the game in the country.

Bangladesh Navy Chess Team, comprising GM Reefat Bin Sattar, GM Enamul Haque Razib and GM Abdullah Al Rakib, became runners-up with 14 points in their inaugural appearance while Leonine Chess Club finished third with 12 points.

## BKSP make solid start

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) got their Steelbird International 42nd Nehru International Junior Hockey Tournament campaign off to flier as they thumped holders Govt. Senior Secondary School Ladowali, Jalandhar of Punjab 4-1 at Shivaji Stadium in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Ashraf, Sagar and Imon struck one goal each for BKSP while the opponents conceded a suicidal goal, informed wing commander Rafiul Haque, representative of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation president.

BKSP will play their next match against Guruda Hockey Academy on Tuesday.