

BD start Chess Olympiad today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national chess teams today start their 41st Chess Olympiad 2014 mission which got underway in Tromso, Norway yesterday. The men's team, which achieved their best performance in the last Olympiad in 2012 by finishing 33rd, are ranked 55th with an average rating of 2479 points in the Open section which will feature 178 teams. The five-man team comprises four Grand Masters -- Ziaur Rahman, Abdullah Al Rakib, Niaz Murshed, Enamul Hossain and International Master Minhazuddin Ahmed.

The women's team, which finished 52nd last time around, will be starting the tournament as the 59th ranked side (2031 average rating points) out of 139 teams. The women's team features two Women's International Masters -- Shamima Akter Liza and Rani Hamid -- and three Women's FIDE Masters in Nazrana Khan, Sharmin Shirin Sultana and Zakia Sultana.

Bangladesh's opponents in the first round will be determined after the captains' meeting prior to the beginning of matches today.

The men's team's performance stands to be boosted by the guidance of Russian-born Dutch GM Sergey Tiviakov, who was flown in a month ago to train the players for the Olympiad.

The men's and women's teams left here for Tromso on July 30 for the Olympiad, which will end on August 14.

The event got underway last night through a spectacular opening ceremony -- a grand visual show and performances by leading Norwegian musicians -- at the northern city of Tromso.

Scotland mine more gold

AFP, Glasgow



Host nation Scotland's gold medal tally hit double figures on Friday as sprint legend Usain Bolt and British teenage diving star Tom Daley prepared to make their eagerly anticipated Commonwealth Games entrances.

Scotland claimed their 11th title in Glasgow courtesy of their lawn bowls men's fours and gymnast Daniel Purvis in the men's parallel bars.

In the pool, Jack Laughler and Chris Mears beat Australia's Grant Nel and Matthew Mitcham in the men's synchronised 3m springboard for England's 45th gold.

Australia cruised into the gold medal match of the women's hockey with a 7-1 mauling of South Africa.

The Hockeyroos will face England, who beat New Zealand on penalties, in Saturday's final.

Winners of the gold medal in three of the four competitions since hockey was introduced to the Commonwealth programme, Australia have now scored 32 goals in winning their five games in Glasgow so far.

"I am very satisfied with the performance. Our ability, particularly in the second-half, to finish off our chances was excellent," said Australia coach Adam Commens.

Singapore are guaranteed gold and silver medals in the women's table tennis after Lay Jian Fang failed in her attempt to break their stranglehold.

The Australian 42-year-old's old fashioned "penhold" style could not get the better of second seed Yu Mengyu who

won quite comfortably 11-3, 11-8, 11-8, 11-6.

Yu faces her compatriot and world number four Feng Tianwei in the final later Friday.

But there was an upset in the men's doubles semi-finals as Indian pairing Sharath Kamal and Anthony Arputharaj put out second seeds Yang Zi and Zhan Jian from Singapore to spark wild scenes of celebration.

Despite that loss, the dominant nation in this sport at this Games are still represented in the final after top seeds Li Hun and Gao Ning beat England's Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford.

James Willstrop, England's losing men's singles finalist, kept alive his hopes of another medal after a closely-fought victory over New Zealanders Lance Beddoes and Paul Coll with partner Daryl Selby.

The English third seeds needed 68 minutes to win an exciting quarterfinal 11-8, 6-11, 11-9 to make the last four as the doubles events progressed towards the final stages on Friday.

The evening spotlight is split between the pool, where English diver Daley teams up with James Denny in the men's synchronised 10m platform, and on the track, where Bolt runs in the 4x100m relay heats.

The Jamaican superstar opted out of the 100m and 200m, won by Jamaican teammates Kemar Bailey-Cole and Rash

eed Dwyer respectively.

Olympic champion Sally Pearson goes for the 100m hurdles title while world champion Eunice Sum will be favourite in the women's 800m.

Kenyan dominance is likely to come in the men's 3000m steeplechase where double Olympic champion Ezekiel Kemboi Cheboi is chasing a second Commonwealth gold eight years on from his success at Melbourne 2006.

Ugandan Moses Kipsiro is back to try and defend his 10,000m title, having already lost his 5,000m title earlier in the Games.

There are also finals in the women's high jump and discus, and the men's pole vault, while boxing enters the semifinal stages.

In other news, Nigerian teenage weightlifter Chika Amalaha faces a hearing before the Commonwealth Games Federation over her failed drugs test.

Amalaha, whose A sample failed a control after claiming gold in the women's 53kg category on July 25, also produced a positive B sample.

The tests revealed traces of diuretics and masking agents.

And the sex assault trial of a Commonwealth Games weightlifter from Papua New Guinea was adjourned on Friday due to the lack of an interpreter.



Elisabeth Black of Canada performs on the beam during the women's gymnastics apparatus final at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow yesterday. She won gold in the event.

PHOTO: REUTERS

BPL appeals hearing on August 6

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A preliminary hearing for the appeals made by former national captain Mohammad Ashraful and the three other parties, against the decisions made by the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) anti-corruption tribunal regarding corruption charges in the second season of the Bangladesh Premier League, will take place on August 6.

The hearing will be chaired by Justice Mohammad Abdur Rashid, chairman of the BCB's disciplinary panel. Apart from Ashraful, Sri Lanka cricketer Kaushal Lokuarachchi, Dhaka Gladiators owner Shihab Chowdhury and the ICC along with the BCB appealed against the sanctions announced last month.

On June 18 the three-member tribunal suspended Lokuarachchi for 18 months, Shihab for ten years and Ashraful for eight. According to a notice of hearing released by the chairman, Shihab, in addition to appealing against the sanctions also appealed against the 'determination of liability' factor which led to him being found guilty.

"After listening to all the parties at the preliminary hearing we will fix a date for the final hearing. It will be a quick process," Justice Rashid told The Daily Star.

Appealing to the chairman of the BCB's disciplinary panel is the first step of appealing against the sanctions. If required, the parties can then appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.

Ali's 'Fight of the Century' gloves fetch \$400,000

REUTERS, London

The gloves that boxing great Muhammad Ali wore in his legendary 1971 fight against Joe Frazier in what became known as the Fight of the Century sold at auction on Thursday for almost 400,000 dollars.

An anonymous bidder bought the gloves for 388,375 dollars at the auction run by Texas-based Heritage Auctions at the National Sports Collectors Convention in Cleveland. Heritage previously auctioned a set of gloves Ali wore to claim his first World Championship in 1964 for 836,500 dollars.

The Fight of the Century, in New York's Madison Square Garden, was the first of three fights between Ali and Frazier during the 1970s.

In 1971, Frazier officially held the title of Heavy-weight Champion of the World.

Gavaskar slams 'zero resistance'

AFP, New Delhi



India's massive 266-run Test defeat to England drew widespread condemnation on Friday with former captain Sunil Gavaskar accusing Mahendra Singh Dhoni's team of "abject surrender" in Southampton.

"To lose this Test even before lunch on the final day showed zero resistance whatsoever," Gavaskar told the NDTV news channel.

"There was no fight and that is a disappointing aspect," added the former record-breaking opening batsman, who is now a television commentator.

"India's loss was an abject surrender."

The result allowed the hosts to record their first win in 11 Tests and level the five-match series 1-1 after they had conceded the lead in the previous Test at Lord's.

Gavaskar said the "sloppy" display by Dhoni's tourists had given England the chance to overcome the morale-sapping loss at Lord's.

"India had England on the ropes at Lord's," he said. "I don't know what they did in the five intervening days before the game but they were sloppy on the field at Southampton."

"This has been the problem with the Indian team since the 1930s -- the complacency."

The Indian Express said the sudden turnaround in the series left India with a lot of questions heading into the fourth Test at Manchester which begins on August 7.

"One Test match can make a lot of difference," the paper wrote. "After the Lord's win, India were on a high. But after Southampton, the team is posed with plenty of problems, while England have a problem of plenty."

Former captain Sourav Ganguly said he was disappointed that Indian batsmen, renowned for playing spin well, allowed England off-spinner Moeen Ali to claim six wickets in the second innings.

Ganguly also called for the inclusion of opening batsman Gautam Gambhir in place of the struggling Shikhar Dhawan and wanted fast bowler Varun Aaron to be given a chance.

"The team needs fresher ideas at the top and Gambhir must be brought in," he said.

"Aaron has no experience of playing in England, but he needs to be given a chance. A bit more pace and you never know."

Ganguly was, however, confident India will bounce back in the next Test, saying England were "still vulnerable".

Venus ousts Victoria

AFP, Stanford

Seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams ousted fourth-seeded birthday girl Victoria Azarenka in straight sets Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the WTA hardcourt tournament at Stanford.

The 6-4, 7-6 (7/1) triumph kept Williams on course for a possible semifinal showdown with her sister Serena, the world number one and top seed who will take on Ana Ivanovic in the quarter-finals on Friday.

"Williams-Williams tomorrow, hopefully," Venus told the crowd at the campus of Stanford University, where she came out on top in a hard-fought, physical duel with Azarenka that lasted an hour and 42 minutes.

"It's never easy to play Victoria. We've always had extremely tough matches, so I expected that tonight as well," said Williams, who acknowledged that Azarenka may have been at a disadvantage after having a first-round bye.

Anderson, Jadeja cleared of misconduct by ICC

CRICINFO



James Anderson and Ravindra Jadeja have been found not guilty of breaching the ICC Code of Conduct during their alleged altercation at Trent Bridge by judicial commissioner Gordon Lewis at the hearing in Southampton on Friday.

After a day of hearing evidence and submissions from both sides it was said the verdict could take up to 48 hours to be delivered but in the end commissioner Lewis, who had joined via Skype from Australia, needed a matter of minutes to come to his decision.

Anderson will now be available for the final two Tests of the series, which is level at 1-1, including his home match at Old Trafford that starts on August 7. If Anderson had been guilty he would have faced a ban of at least two Tests.

Neither team is allowed to appeal the verdict with only the ICC chief executive able to lodge a challenge.

"The Judicial Commissioner reached his decisions following a six-hour hearing, which took place via videoconference," the ICC said. "Witnesses, including some Indian and English players, provided evidence and were cross-examined by the respective legal counsels."

Anderson was facing a Level 3 charge for allegedly abusing and pushing Jadeja at the start of the lunch break on the second day of the first Test at Trent Bridge. The charge had been laid by India's team manager Sunil Dev and was countered by a Level 2 charged laid by England manager Phil Neale against Jadeja.

Jadeja was alleged to have turned towards Anderson in a threatening manner and had originally been found guilty by match referee David Boon at a previous hearing and fined 50% of his match fee. After applying legal pressure India were allowed to lodge an appeal, which was heard today, and Jadeja was also found not guilty.

The ECB and Anderson were represented in the hearings by Nick De Marco while Adam Lewis QC represented Jadeja. The hearings were also attended by the two team managers, the ECB's managing director Paul Downton, the BCCI's Sundar Raman and MV Sridhar, the ICC's General Manager - Cricket, Geoff Allardice, and the ICC's Ethics and Regulatory lawyer, Sally Clark.

The news comes as a relief for England especially after the hosts' 266-run victory in the third Test in Southampton on Thursday - their first Test win in 11 Tests -- was engineered by Anderson, who was named the man-of-the-match for his seven wickets in the match.

Dutch coaches to meet Salahuddin

SPORTS REPORTER

Dutch coaches of the Bangladesh national football team -- Lodewijk de Kruif and Rene Koster -- are expected to meet the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin at the BFF president's residence today, after arriving in the early morning for talks over their unpaid wages. De Kruif is believed to be owed six months of wages while Koster is also reportedly owed a similar length of unpaid wages.

The inability to clear the wages and lack of work opportunity led BFF to send the two coaches to extended vacation -- De Kruif spending the last four months in Netherlands. Both the coaches have expressed their dissatisfaction over the issue to the media from time to time, yet the issue remains unsolved.

The issue is a thorn in the side for BFF, which itself is frustrated at not getting any positive response yet from the government over its proposed fund (35-crore-a-year for five years).

Regardless of the meeting's outcome, the two coaches are expected to oversee the 25-member football camp for September's Asian Games starting tomorrow at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) in Savar.